AUM

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THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY
THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY,
AND ARYAN LITERATURE

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Theosophy

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The Parent Theosophical Society was formed at New York, U. S. A., in 1875, by H. P. Blavatsky, with whom were associated William Q. Judge, Henry S. Olcott, and others.

The defined Objects of the Society were as follows:

I. To form a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color.

II. The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and

III. The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Assent to the First Object only was obligatory on the part of all Fellows, the other Objects being subsidiary and optional.

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

Declaration

The policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great Founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the Self; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is *"similarity of aim, purpose and teaching,"* and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its associates being that *basis*. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect,
yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate; it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the Form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists.

Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no dues of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

Correspondence should be addressed to

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A U M

I am the cause; I am the production and dissolution of the whole of nature. There is no superior to me, O conqueror of wealth! On me is all the Universe suspended as the bead-gems on a necklace.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

Should one fly even after furnishing oneself with thousands upon thousands of wings, and even though one should have the velocity of thought, one would never reach the end of the Great Cause.—*Sanatsujatiya, Ch. VI.*

THEOSOPHY

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No Theosophical Society, as such, is responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

Where any article, or statement, has the author's name attached, he alone is responsible, and for those which are unsigned, the Editors will be accountable.

MASTERS AND THEIR MESSAGE

SOME CHAPTERS FROM THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY.

THE ASSAULTS ON H. P. B.

Our work, then, is a plea for the recognition of the Hermetic philosophy, the anciently universal Wisdom Religion, as the only possible key to the Absolute in science and theology. To show that we do not at all conceal from ourselves the gravity of our undertaking, we may say in advance that it would not be strange if the following classes should array themselves against us:

The Christians, who will see that we question the evidences of the genuineness of their faith.

The Scientists, who will find their pretensions placed in the same bundle with those of the Roman Catholic Church for infallibility, and, in certain particulars, the sages and philosophers of the ancient world classed higher than they.

Pseudo-Scientists will, of course, denounce us furiously.

Broad Churchmen and Freethinkers will find that we do not accept what they do, but demand the recognition of the whole truth.

Men of letters and various AUTHORITIES, who hide their real belief in deference to popular prejudices.

The mercenaries and parasites of the Press, who prostitute its more than royal power, and dishonor a noble profession, will find it easy to mock at things too wonderful for them to understand; for to them the price of a paragraph is more than the value of sincerity. From many will come honest criticism; from many—cant. But we look to the future.

The contest now going on between the party of public con-

science and the party of reaction, has already developed a healthier tone of thought. It will hardly fail to result ultimately in the overthrow of error and the triumph of Truth. We repeat again—we are laboring for the brighter morrow.

And yet, when we consider the bitter opposition that we are called upon to face, who is better entitled than we upon entering the arena to write upon our shield the hail of the Roman gladiator to Caesar: MORITURUS TE SALUTAT!

H. P. BLAVATSKY, New York, September, 1877;
Preface to Isis Unveiled.

H. P. B. had been in America three years when the foregoing sentences were penned. She had met Col. Olcott at the Eddy farmhouse in Vermont, scene of spiritualistic performances described in Col. Olcott's book, *People From the Other World,* and aroused his intense interest and curiosity in her, in the phenomena she was able to evoke at will, either directly, or through mediums, and in the guarded statements made to him, concerning powers latent in all men, and concerning men of a high state of development, spiritually, psychically and physically, whose existence was unknown to the West. She had met William Q. Judge, then a young man of twenty-four or five, and twenty years the junior of both Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott. Mr. Judge was unknown and obscure, Col. Olcott a well known lawyer, writer, and investigator of spiritualistic phenomena. She had met Prof. A. Wilder, a student of ancient philosophies and author of numerous books and articles. She had been in correspondence with many men and women in Europe and the East on matters of effort and interest in connection with subjects indicated in the Second and Third Objects of the newly formed Theosophical Society, most of whose members, both in New York and London, the two earliest societies, were spiritualists. She had written numerous articles for Spiritualist publications and the daily press, most of them devoted to reasons, arguments and analyses of evidence tending to show that the various "messages" and other manifestations were not necessarily communications from the spirits of the dead, but might, and indeed should, be ascribed to a variety of agencies. Other letters were written in fiery defense of the genuineness of the phenomena of séances, of mediums, and of the necessity for serious investigation of abnormal manifestations of all sorts. Many of these letters are to be found in the book, *A Modern Panarion,* others are buried in the files of periodicals of the day. She had received at her apartments and had met hundreds of seekers after the marvelous, had illustrated her contentions and theories by numerous phenomena performed offhand before all sorts of witnesses and under all sorts of conditions. The variety and nature of these are spoken of at length in Col. Olcott's *Old Diary Leaves,* originally published serially in the pages of *The Theosophist,* and afterwards reprinted in book form; repeated references to them are scattered through the volumes of *The Path,* published at New York by Mr. Judge from 1886 to 1896;

and in Mr. Sinnett's book, *Incidents in the Life of H. P. Blavatsky,* published at London in 1886, following the "exposure" of Madame Blavatsky contained in the third volume of the Reports of the Society for Psychical Research, London, 1885, it is shown that such phenomena had occurred from her earliest childhood. The philosophy, life and character of Madame Blavatsky being at all understood, the Report and "exposure" spoken of becomes in fact a most extraordinary testimony and evidence of the actual and genuine powers possessed unbrokenly by H. P. B. And the same may be said of the book, *A Modern Priestess of Isis,* written by V. Solovyoff, an English translation of which was published at London under the auspices of the Society for Psychical Research in 1895, four years after the death of H. P. B. During all the period spoken of, H. P. B. was giving instruction both to Col. Olcott and to Mr. Judge, perhaps also to others, of a nature and character that did not develop till years afterward. As subsequently appeared, the teaching imparted to Mr. Judge was of an extent unknown to Col. Olcott, and in the same way the relation subsisting between H. P. B. and Mr. Judge was unknown and unsuspected by any and not until after the death of H. P. B. did signs of this relation begin to appear noticeably in the theosophical atmosphere.

In the midst of these multifarious activities, only faintly indicated in the preceding paragraph, *Isis Unveiled* was written. Statements in reference to the manner and method of its composition will be found in *Old Diary Leaves,* and in the article, "Theories About Reincarnation and Spirits," originally printed in *The Path* for November, 1886, and the article, "My Books," originally printed in *Lucifer* for May, 1891. Both these articles have been reprinted in "Theosophy."

H. P. B's public career may be said to have begun with the publication of *Isis Unveiled* in 1877. She continued the center of an ever-widening storm area until her death, May 8, 1891. Although it is still too early by centuries for any but the most devoted of her students to see or foresee the world changes set in motion by her mighty wisdom and enormous energy, it is yet possible in the interval that has elapsed since the inauguration of the Theosophical Movement of the nineteenth century, to perceive some momentous facts in relation to her and her work, and to make some deductions from them which, the facts being recognized, are unavoidable.

It is clear that she never had any doubts from first to last of the infallibility of the principles she proclaimed, the facts she presented, the applications she made. Never a doubt appears concerning her own mission, concerning the Masters, concerning the philosophy. In other words, she was consistent throughout in all she wrote and in all that she did. What she said and did in the later years of her life, were not what she said and did in the beginning of her public work, but they were an expansion, an unfolding. All that she ever wrote after *Isis* was as implicit in *Isis* as the oak

is implicit in the acorn. She had often occasion to correct the understanding and interpretation by others, friends as foes, of her work. It is not of record that she ever recanted a statement made by her. She often varied her efforts, as a mother varies her steps to the needs of her child, and always for the same reason, the weakness or the puerility of the child, never from any weakness or puerility of her own.

It is clear that she never had any doubts as to how her mission, her work and her philosophy would be received by the world at large, nor any doubts or ignorance as to the pitfalls into which the students of the philosophy she brought would fall, for in both cases she over and over again pointed out before the event—always pointed out in advance of the event so far as we are aware—the trend of action and result. Her every writing will be found on study and reflection to contain a laying down of principles, a recital of facts, an application to a case at hand, a lesson drawn and an instruction given for the immediate future. She was as consistent and as orderly as nature in all that she did, *and she followed the same processes.*

It is clear that she was under no delusion as to the reception she herself would meet, but saw from the first what fate was in store for herself from the very nature of the Message she brought. She knew that the philosophy was unassailable because it was not of human discovery or invention, but was a statement of everlasting Law. She knew that the acceptation in full of this philosophy meant the subversion of every human creed, dogma, theory, speculation and fancy, with whatever name or sanction invested—the destruction of the ruling motive and the ruling ideas of the race. She knew that those who lived upon this motive and these ideas would fight to the last ditch of desperation. She knew, too, that since the students, however earnest and sincere, were of the race, each one of them would have to fight in himself to the death of this same motive and these same ideas. The race motive, the human motive, is *selfish,* the race idea is acquisition, possession, enjoyment, to whatever field of earth or heaven it may be turned. Is it any wonder that she should say that she did not conceal from herself the gravity of her undertaking, that she speaks of the bitter opposition she would be called upon to face, while yet profoundly repeating that she labored for the brighter morrow which "will hardly fail to result ultimately in the overthrow of error and the triumph of Truth?" She came, a willing martyr, to her work, her betrayal and her crucifixion, in order that Theosophy might have birth into the world of men once more, but came clear-seeing, lived clear-seeing and died clear-seeing—seeing what was and was to be.

In forty years there has not appeared to our knowledge one single effort in any quarter to overthrow the philosophy she promulgated, the facts she recited, the deductions she made. They have never been seriously assailed. Yet she wrote well-nigh inces-

santly during a period of sixteen years, on every conceivable subject, and for the most part with the scantiest of human means of reference or verification of what she wrote, and in a body almost constantly racked by disease, in a mental atmosphere of suspicion, of surveillance or of the most malignant hostility.

During her whole public career every assault that should have been directed against her philosophy and her facts was leveled against her. Is not the reason clear? The philosophy was impregnable: she was not. She had a human body, a human nature. She could be attacked in her honor, her reputation, her honesty, her motives, what not. The method has ever been the same: the Message being indestructible, destroy the messenger; the evidence being unassailable, assail the character and credibility of the witness. This has been true of every Christ and of every heroic character in history, and true in degree of their most loyal and devoted followers.

By this method and by this method alone can vested interests prolong their privilege and their existence. They live and thrive upon the ignorance and the credulity no less than upon the sins of the multitude. The Saviours and the Heroes of the race come in one service to all. The only privilege they can offer is the privilege to share their service and their martyrdom. This is not inviting either to those who dispense wisdom, honors or salvation for a price, or to those who would wish to acquire for a price. Yet always, at each Incarnation, a few who are sick of possessions and a few who have none, hear and see. And H. P. B. came, as the Predecessors came, as the Messengers only can come, to such as these.

For the sake of students attracted to Theosophy itself and who must sooner or later come in contact with one and another of the many calumnies circulated in regard to H. P. B., no less than for the sake of those older students who believe in the philosophy but who hold no certain knowledge in regard to H. P. B., and who are confused, bewildered or led afield by the numerous claims and counter claims of "successors" to the mantle of the prophet, who must perforce belittle H. P. B. whenever her teachings come in conflict with their own pretensions and claims—for the sake of all these and all those whom they may contact, it seems wise at this stage to take up in chronological order some of the many assaults upon the name and fame of H. P. B., and consider what lessons and applications may be drawn from them.

The first assault was at the hands of spiritualistic theorists. Their views as to the source and meaning of manifestations were conflicting among themselves, but the ideas promulgated by H. P. B. were totally at variance with all of them. She was assailed as having first pretended to be a spiritualist herself, then as becoming a traitor to all that they held dear, and their enemy. One by one the ardent spiritualists broke company with the Society and many

who had at first been warm friends became unsparingly hostile. H. P. B. was accused of being herself a medium, and a trickster and fraud in her own phenomena. The spiritualist methods and the spiritualistic views were shared or adopted by many who were neither spiritualists nor theosophists and the stories and assaults originally set afloat by sincere but disappointed and hostile spiritualist writers still continue. The files of the leading spiritualist publications of the period contain many such attacks. Students will also find in the appendices to the later editions of the *Occult World* clear indices of the feelings of prominent spiritualists in the controversy therein indicated over some passages in one of the letters of the Master K. H. contained in the volume.

H. P. B.'s views and attitude are clearly set out in various articles reprinted in *A Modern Panarion,* in *Isis Unveiled,* in the earlier volumes of *The Theosophist,* and in the article, "Is Theosophy a Religion," originally published in *Lucifer,* and reprinted in "THEOSOPHY." She never showed any but friendliness for the spiritualists, as for men of all other opinions, defended them on numberless occasions, but always held unchangingly to her clearly defined statements as to the nature and character of the phenomena of the séance room, the sources of the manifestations, the dangers of mediumship and of the risks of dabbling in unknown fields of nature.

From the first she was assailed with charges of plagiarism, of merely rehashing exploded ancient religions and philosophies, of presenting under the guise of Theosophy nothing but a hodge-podge of paganism and pantheism. The bitterest of this class of assaults originated in the pages of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal,* which was also the vehicle for the later attacks of Prof. Elliot Coues and Mabel Collins.

These charges continually re-appear from quarters widely at variance, Catholic, Protestant, scientific, spiritualistic, and "occult." The truth is, as any one who takes the trouble to consult any of H. P. B.'s writings may know for himself at first-hand, is that from first to last H. P. B. never made any claims whatever as to originality in philosophy, ethics, science or knowledge. On the contrary her first published words (Preface to *Isis Unveiled*) distinctly disclaims any invention of her own, and this attitude was never departed from in all her subsequent efforts. *Isis,* as all her later writings, is filled with quotations from every source, modern and ancient. Her books are so burdened with citations and references as almost to be overladen with them, and make them rather open to the charge of pedantry than plagiarism. To a legal mind her writings in great part read like a brief, with statements of points at issue, principles established, evidence, arguments and references. To have placed quotes and acknowledgements in every use made of material in the world would have been mere affectation. It is, again, stated by her numberless times that what she is promulgating

is the Wisdom-Religion, which is the origin of all the world religions, their splits and off-shoots and she proves this by showing the fundamental ideas underlying every one of them, and tracing out the course of their divagations. One has, for example, but to read the preface and the Introduction to the *Secret Doctrine*, to be forever disabused regarding numberless charges leveled against H. P. B. The sole strength and validity, we may say unequivocally, of every charge ever made against H. P. B. lies in the ignorance and the prejudice of the author and recipient of the charge. The charge falls of its own weight whenever actually investigated at first-hand.

The charges against her are in all cases at flat contradiction with some other charge, as in the two classes so far recited. If she were a medium, it is certain that no other medium, nor all the mediums of which history has record, ever left such a stupendous monument of self-sacrifice, of knowledge, of learning, of power, of self-control and of impress upon the mind of the race as did H. P. B., so that to call her a "medium" is to "classify" Washington with anyone who happened to have or to have been given that name. On the other hand, to charge or to accredit her with the "invention" of Theosophy, the Masters, the vast world system of evolution, of philosophy, religion and science, which she assuredly promulgated, is to give the lie to any charge of plagiarism, "mediumship" or chicanery hurled against her. To accept one set of charges against H. P. B. it is necessary to deny all the others. To study her own actual writings and consistent life, is to understand that all the charges were baseless, but were none the less an inevitable concomitant of the work she undertook: to bring to a world torn and suffering from a myriad delusions, the one true everlasting Wisdom-Religion, which must from its very nature be subversive of all delusions, and its Messenger therefore certain from the first to be the shield of the Message and the victim of its foes.

Unquestionably the generally held view in the world at large among those who are accounted the makers and moulders of public opinion is that Madame Blavatsky was a monumental fraud and imposter, and Theosophy a more or less harmless mosaic of fiction and ancient philosophy, and its followers and students visionaries and "mystics" ready to take up with anything bordering on the weird, the marvelous, or the supernatural. The great mass of men still follow blindly their accepted "authorities" in all matters and seldom or never seek or receive first-hand knowledge on any subject. Naturally, these "authorities" lose at once their pre-eminence, their position and power, if their following should by any means come to believe in their fallibility, their ignorance or their falsity. Equally naturally the "authorities" would be overthrown were they to range themselves in support of views utterly subversive of the ideas and beliefs long ingrained in the multitude. The priest and

the laity are mutual bulwarks. The public must have its idol. Occasionally idols are overthrown and new fetishes adopted, or old ones revamped. But this constitutes the sum of human "progress." For this reason was it written, "human nature as a whole has changed but little in a million of years." When it is realized that the mission of H. P. B. was just this: to *change* human nature, the colossal character of the task undertaken, the entrenched barriers to be leveled, are better understood. One would be staggered at a proposal to submerge a continent and thus utterly dissipate its accumulations; to raise from the depths of the sea a new area and on the new foundations to erect an utterly new civilization. The task of H. P. B. was greater than this. Dearly as men prize their human possessions of property and place, they prize more dearly their mental possessions, their ideas of life, their fixed conceptions as to deity, nature and man. Yet if the philosophy promulgated by H. P. B. is true, the whole foundation of basic ideas of humanity is false, the whole structure of thought and action erected on these basic ideas must come down, not merely be repaired, readjusted, reformed. They must be *destroyed*. Few even of the most devoted students realized this and set themselves resolutely to the task in themselves. But those whose place and power depended on the established order of things, on the fixed ideas of the race, could but sense and feel the catastrophe in which they would be involved whichever horn of the dilemma they might take. If the new ideas were boldly adopted and proclaimed by them assuredly the masses could not follow, but would dethrone their idols and set themselves up new ones. To adopt the ideas proclaimed by H. P. B. was to cease to be "leaders" and "authorities," to become followers and students, to subject themselves to the same pitiless and thankless immolation as was visited on her. To reject the Christ is always easier than to accept Him; to crucify easier than to be crucified with Him.

This conscious and unconscious resistance to change took countless forms during the public period of H. P. B.'s work, but was always directed against Her, or against those who adopted the principles she promulgated, never against the ideas themselves, as stated. And the attacks always centered upon the necessarily vulnerable point of her phenomena. If her character could be assailed and her reputation destroyed, no credibility would attach to her phenomena and no attention to her philosophy. Her phenomena being physical in effect and metaphysical in causation, the borderland lay in the testimony of the witnesses. Her phenomena being uncommon and her explanations uncanonical, court and jury were necessarily alien to the testimony. Credulity in one direction is balanced by incredulity in the opposite. One part of the world had dogmatic religion for its fetish, another had materialistic science, and a minor third the spiritualistic and other psychological theories as idol or ideal. These were all fiercely in opposition, credulous to

the last degree of their own formulae and exponents, utterly incredulous as to the others. They were allies only in opposition to Theosophy, its Messenger and her phenomena. This was inevitable.

The work and the philosophy being planted in America, most plastic, or least indurated, point in the West, H. P. B. went to India. Fixed and immovable as is the Oriental mind in contrast with the West, it yet remained and remains that only in India could there be any conceivable opening for injecting the ideas of Universal Brotherhood. For in India the abstract principles re-embodied in Theosophy had and have a wide currency, however adulterated by the religions and sects of the East. In America was the only possibility of implanting principles, and their application in practice. In India was a possibility of inaugurating the application of principles which had been accepted in theory from time immemorial. In the same way it can be seen that in England, to which H. P. B. removed from India, lay the only possible opening in Europe for the sowing of the seed and the dissemination of the harvest, great or small.

We have seen how opposition and antagonism developed in America. But, if we have surveyed truly the contour of the field of labor, it would naturally be in India that we should expect to find the basis and citadel of the forces arrayed against H. P. B. And this, in point of fact, is what the course of events developed.

No sooner were H. P. B. and Col. Olcott landed in India and work commenced among the natives than rumors were set afloat that she was a Russian spy, Col. Olcott her accomplice, and her alleged Theosophical Society or Universal Brotherhood but a convenient cloak and disguise. They were for some time under surveillance of the British authorities and their every movement watched. In no long time the Government discovered the stupidity of this misconception and there was no further interference.

Next bitter abuse and stories were circulated among the natives by local Catholic missions. In time these also fell of their own weight. Further calumnies were set afloat by the Rev. Joseph Cook on his visit to the protestant missions in India in the early '80's and met the same fate. Within two years of their landing in Bombay work was well started by H. P. B. and Col. Olcott among the natives, the publication of *The Theosophist* was begun, influential Hindus of various castes and sects had joined the Society, acquaintance had been made with a number of leading Englishmen, among them Mr. Sinnett, editor of the most widely circulated English daily, Mr. Hume, recently Secretary of the government of India, Army officers and others, so that there were the beginnings of a genuine *rapprochment* between Europeans and natives of the best class on both sides, as well as some degree of fraternization among adherents and devotees of the native sects and castes. Much space was given the new Society and its work, as well as to the doings of the two Founders, in all the English and native publications.

Mention has been made of a tentative alliance formed from New York in the earliest days of the Society, with the Arya-somaj, a native effort for religious reform. At first the two Founders were welcomed with open arms by the Somaj, but the rapid rise of interest in the new movement and the attention given it, together with the fact that the pioneers of the Society resolutely refused to side with any sect or schism, giving their whole effort to the spread of the new ideas and applications, soon gave rise to coolness, then to antagonism, and opposition of every sort.

About a year after the arrival in Bombay there came to India Mme. and M. Couloumb, a French-Italian couple, whom H. P. B. had met and known in Cairo in 1872-3 where there had been an earlier attempt to form a group along lines similar to the Third Object of the Theosophical Society—in other words, an attempt to arouse attention to the reality and genuine nature of mediumistic and psychical phenomena, and study of their causation. In this attempt Mme. Couloumb had shared as she was mediumistic herself. The attempt failed.

The two Couloumbs forthwith hunted up H. P. B. and claimed her help, as they were penniless. Work was given M. Couloumb as a sort of man-of-all-work around the newly established premises of the Society. Mme. Coulomb was given charge of details as housekeeper and quasi-amanuensis, as means were limited, the work great and willing hands but few. Both M. and Mme. Coulomb professed great interest in the new Society, which they joined, and great personal gratitude and devotion to Madame Blavatsky for succouring them at a time of great distress.

Thus matters proceeded until 1884, the number of Branches throughout India ever-increasing, the sphere of interest in the Society ever-enlarging, the headquarters more and more the scene of activities and the coming and going of every variety of curiosity hunter and student of the occult. The Couloumbs, with the increasing growth of the Society and activity at the headquarters, apparently became more and more discontented with the minor position they occupied, more and more envious and dubious regarding the attention paid by all comers to H. P. B. To new-comers and old Mme. Couloumb frequently voiced her dissatisfaction and hinted that she could make revelations which would diminish the importance of H. P. B. and increase her own. With various native members she first hinted and then proclaimed her own powers of divination, and on several occasions endeavoured to procure money from members. Her nature and character were known, but she was treated by H. P. B. exactly as so many others had been and were afterwards dealt with by her. That is to say, H. P. B. never refused anyone soever who sought her, never denied what help could be given to any claimant or applicant, accepted one and all, not for what they were but for what they claimed to be. She literally, in

all cases, took every one at his own word, and herself bore, without complaint and without any self-protective measures, whatever befell her when the real nature of the applicant came to the surface. Never in any case did she raise her voice in self-defense, excuse or explanation. But she fought ever with lion-like courage and hardihood in defense of her Masters, the Society, the philosophy, and its students of every degree. This unchanged action and character should of itself have been a blazing evidence to all students of who She was and what She represented in her own person. Those who have read the prefatory statements in the writing called the Third Instruction, should have been able to make an everlasting application therefrom, because what took place in India in 1884 was duplicated in the case of William Q. Judge ten years later. She who saved others, was barred by the very nature of her Being and her Mission, from any attempt to save herself.

Early in 1884 the Couloumbs laid before the Council at Adyar—H. P. B. and Col. Olcott being then in Europe—charges that Madame Blavatsky was in fact a trickster and her phenomena produced during preceding years at the headquarters by chicanery, made possible by their collusion; that they had been brought to India by H. P. B. for that purpose and that their ostensible employment was but a part of the mask of deception. Their charges were listened to, and they were invited to substantiate them. As the charges rested entirely upon their unsupported statements; as by their own confession they were tricksters themselves, and as, finally, there was not one of the Council but had repeatedly been independently witness at the hands of H. P. B. of phenomena in which the Couloumbs could have had no part, and under circumstances which precluded advance preparations on the part of any one, while two of its members, at least, had been themselves recipients of communications and other phenomenal manifestations directly, the charges could only be considered in the light of an admitted reflection upon the Couloumbs. And as they admitted, in addition, efforts to obtain money from members to locate "buried treasures," etc., the Council, after deliberation, expelled both the Couloumbs from the Society for violation of the Rules indicated in earlier numbers of this series.

Missionary hostility to the Society and its prominence and purposes had never for a moment lapsed. Mme. Couloumb opened negotiations and found a quick response. In August and September, 1884, the *Christian College Magazine* published a series of letters and comments, emanating from Mme. Couloumb, and purporting to have been written at various times by H. P. B., in which, in the midst of irrelevant matter relating to the day to day work at headquarters, were incessant statements showing unblushing trickery and fraud and delight in them. None of the letters were dated, the envelopes were missing, no responsibility for their genuineness nor accuracy was assumed by the magazine, which pub-

lished them as on the responsibility of Mme. Couloumb, but with the statement that their genuineness was believed.

The bomb fell flat. Most of the leading Indian papers condemned off-hand the infamy of the proceeding, the evident venom behind the publication, the lack of any effort to ascertain from H. P. B. and those around her an affirmation or denial regarding the letters, the one-sided nature of the whole affair. The counter statements of leading Englishmen resident in India, as well as of influential and widely known natives, certifying to their acquaintance with H. P. B., their personal knowledge of her character, her ability and her genuine powers as witnessed by themselves were published and recopied throughout India, as were the denials of those at headquarters and the statements of the members of the Council of the facts regarding the Couloumbs and their expulsion from the Society six months previously. On the return of H. P. B. to India hundreds of native students of the College joined in a fervent welcoming demonstration and a declaration of their respect for her and condemnation of the action taken by the magazine. Missionary organs and missionaries, however, continued the assault with undiminished vigor, and every exploded tale that could be revived and numerous new inventions were added from time to time with all the ardor of political campaigns in the slums. No indication appears of any effort or desire to ascertain the facts, to present both sides, or to do aught but destroy if possible the reputation and standing of H. P. B.

The effort failed utterly in itself. No students of the new teachings were affected, no membership in the new Society was lost, but far and wide throughout the Branches resolutions of love and gratitude were adopted, and after a year or two it would have been as egregious a folly on the part of any enemy of the Society to revive the Couloumb slanders as to have renewed the Russian spy stories of the first days. Yet the after effect of this episode was profound and far-reaching in its influence upon the opinion of the world at large regarding H. P. B., and upon untold thousands of sincere students of Theosophy. For the Couloumb incident was the pith and marrow of the widely known Report of the Society for Psychical Research upon the phenomena of H. P. B., which is the real basis for the accepted conclusion in millions of minds that Madame Blavatsky was a clever imposter and monumental charlatan. And the attitude taken in relation to the Couloumb affair by Col. Olcott was responsible for grievous consequences to himself and unnumbered others who later looked upon him as an exponent, a guide and an example.

It has been essential, therefore, to sketch the main features of this affair in order to make intelligible a consideration of the Report of the Psychical Research Society, which is now to be undertaken.

(To be continued.)

THE ADEPTS*

SOME OBJECTIONS AND ANSWERS TO THEM.

IN this I purpose to give but the condensed form of some objections made to the theory of the existence of the Adepts, and of the answers which might be made. The objections are variously founded, applying as well to the names Masters and Mahatmas as to other designations.

"MASTERS" IS OBJECTIONABLE because contrary to Republicanism or Democracy or Individualism.

But *master* comes from *magister,* who is a teacher, an expounder as well as applier of the law; hence *magistrate.* Everyone, in fact, has a master, whether it be physically, mentally, or morally; and this objection is but the old and foolish exhibition of contempt for regulations of a government from which America escaped long ago.

THE OBJECTOR HAS NEVER SEEN AN ADEPT. This would apply equally to the assertion of the existence of Napoleon or any other character one has not seen, and with more force. For there was but one Napoleon, while there have been and are many Adepts. The ancients all relate histories of Adepts; the Hindus of today do the same; many of the writers of the middle ages and the traditions of the same period speak of them as accepted facts; the traditions of all countries not so new as this give similar testimony; the Chinese, Tibetans, Burmese, and other Oriental people tell of such personages, while Chinese, Buddhist, and Hindu literature teems with testimony. Hence to support the doctrine there is a mass of human testimony larger than that which declares that Buonaparte once dominated Europe. Lastly, several reputable Europeans and Americans, members of the Theosophical Society, affirm on their own knowledge the existence of these Adepts.

THE MODERN CRITIC SAYS: *First,* why do not these Adepts come out to satisfy curiosity if they are men? This question is out of the same spirit that creates the sensational, vulgar, and prying newspaper which spreads before the public, because it is called for by the public, the private details of everyone's existence. *Second,* why not appear and destroy evil if they have great powers? The Adepts have replied that there is no power to destroy the evil man has produced but in the efforts he himself makes for purification. *Thirdly,* why not come and wipe out abuses? *Fourthly,* why not multiply food in famine time?

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* This article was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path* for January, 1893.

Other replies to these may be thus tabulated:

(*a*) The nature of humanity at present is the product of evolution, and only evolution conducted in an orderly manner can alter by perfecting, refining, and purging.

(*b*) It is ridiculous for the Western nations to demand that the Adepts shall multiply food when every one knows there is at all times enough food in hand, either unused or locked up by the men of greed, to feed all the hungry.

(*c*) If food were multiplied thus in the Western world, those who did it would be imprisoned and classed as criminal, for inevitably either the food would be said to be stolen or else the charge of interfering with trade would follow. In Berlin in 1892 the starving people took bread from the shops and were punished for theft. The moral and conclusion are obviously against the objector.

(*d*) No one can disprove the claim made that Adepts have multiplied food in famine times in Eastern lands where condemnation and persecution do not follow that act.

(*e*) Admitting that the Adepts have great powers, they have disclaimed the power to alter human nature in any other way than through the processes of evolution and always strictly under a rigid law of justice.

(*f*) The Adepts do not yet appear publicly and proclaim themselves to the world for reasons found in the above replies, and also because the cycle must run its course, since, if they proclaimed themselves out of time, a wrong result would be produced, just as a note, good in itself, is a producer of discord when sounded out of time, place, or tune. This reason is the reason deduced from the law of cycles.

WHAT, THEN, ARE THE ADEPTS DOING? Not possibly could all their work be stated. But, for a part:

(*a*) Assisting all good movements by acting on men from behind the scenes through mental influence.

(*b*) Preparing as many men and women who are fit for it so that they may, in their next incarnation, appear in the world as active devotees to the good of the Human Family.

(*c*) Spreading now, through impulses given in many places which must not be mentioned, a philosophy of life which will gradually affect the race mind, and in particular the active, conquering Western peoples, thus preparing the whole people to change and evolve yet further and further until evils disappear and better days and people reappear.

WILLIAM BREHON.

DIALOGUES BETWEEN THE TWO EDITORS*

I.

ON ASTRAL BODIES, OR DOPPELGANGERS.

M. C. Great confusion exists in the minds of people about the various kinds of apparitions, wraiths, ghosts or spirits. Ought we not to explain once for all the meaning of these terms? You say there are various kinds of "doubles"—what are they?

H. P. B. Our occult philosophy teaches us that there are three kinds of "doubles," to use the word in its widest sense. (1) Man has his "double" or *shadow,* properly so called, around which the physical body of the *foetus*—the future man—is built. The imagination of the mother, or an accident which affects the child, will affect also the astral body. The astral and the physical both exist before the mind is developed into action, and before the Atma awakes. This occurs when the child is seven years old, and with it comes the responsibility attaching to a conscious sentient being. This "double" is born with man, dies with him and can never separate itself far from the body during life, and though surviving him, it disintegrates, *pari passu,* with the corpse. It is this, which is sometimes seen over the graves like a luminous figure of the man that was, during certain atmospheric conditions. From its physical aspect it is, during life, *man's vital* double, and after death, only the gases given off from the decaying body. But, as regards its origin and essence, it is something more. This "double" is what we have agreed to call *lingasarira,* but which I would propose to call, for greater convenience, "Protean" or "Plastic Body."

M. C. Why Protean or Plastic?

H. P. B. Protean, because it can assume all forms; *e.g.* the "shepherd magicians" whom popular rumour accuses, perhaps not without some reason, of being "were-wolves," and "mediums in cabinets," whose own "Plastic Bodies" play the part of materialized grandmothers and "John Kings." Otherwise, why the invariable custom of the "dear departed angels" to come out but little further than arm's length from the medium, whether entranced or not? Mind, I do not at all deny foreign influences in this kind of phenomena. But I do affirm that foreign interference is rare, and that the materialised form is always that of the medium's "*Astral*" or Protean body.

M. C. But how is this astral body created?

H. P. B. It is not created; it grows, as I told you, with the man and exists in the rudimentary condition even before the child is born.

M. C. And what about the second?

H. P. B. The second is the "Thought" body, or Dream body, rather; known among Occultists as the *Mayavi-rupa*, or "Illusion-body." During life this image is the vehicle both of thought and

* This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for December, 1888.

of the animal passions and desires, drawing at one and the same time from the lowest terrestrial *manas* (mind) and *Kama,* the element of desire. It is *dual* in its potentiality, and after death forms, what is called in the East *Bhoot,* or *Kama-rupa,* but which is better known to theosophists as the "Spook."

M. C. And the third?

H. P. B. The third is the true *Ego,* called in the East, by a name meaning "causal body" but which in the *trans*-Himalayan schools is always called the "Karmic body," which is the same. For *Karma* or action is the cause which produces incessant rebirths or "reincarnations." It is *not* the *Monad,* nor is it *Manas* proper; but is, in a way, indissolubly connected with, and a compound of the Monad and Manas in Devachan.

M. C. Then there are three doubles?

H. P. B. If you can call the Christian and other Trinities "three Gods," then there are three doubles. But in truth there is only one under three aspects or phases: the most material portion disappearing with the body; the middle one, surviving both as an independent, but temporary entity in the land of shadows; the third, immortal, throughout the manvantara unless Nirvana puts an end to it before.

M. C. But shall not we be asked what difference there is between the *Mayavi* and *Kama rupa,* or as you propose to call them the "Dream body" and the "Spook?"

H. P. B. Most likely, and we shall answer, in addition to what has been said, that the "thought power" or aspect of the *Mayavi* or "Illusion body," merges after death entirely into the causal body or the conscious, *thinking* EGO. The animal elements, or power of desire of the "Dream body," absorbing after death that which it has collected (through its insatiable desire to *live*) during life; *i.e.* all the astral vitality as well as all the impressions of its *material* acts and thoughts while it lived in possession of the body, forms the "Spook" or *Kama rupa.* Our Theosophists know well enough that after death the *higher* Manas unites with the *Monad* and passes into Devachan, while the dregs of the *lower manas* or animal mind go to form this Spook. This has life in it, but hardly any consciousness, except, as it were by-proxy; when it is drawn into the current of a medium.

M. C. Is it all that can be said upon the subject?

H. P. B. For the present this is enough metaphysics, I guess. Let us hold to the "Double" in its earthly phase. What would you know?

M. C. Every country in the world believes more or less in the "double" or doppelganger. The simplest form of this is the appearance of a man's phantom, the moment after his death, or at the instant of death, to his dearest friend. Is this appearance the *mayavi rupa?*

H. P. B. It is; because produced by the thought of the dying man.

M. C. Is it unconscious?

H. P. B. It is unconscious to the extent that the dying man does not generally do it knowingly; nor is he aware that he so appears. What happens is this. If he thinks very intently at the moment of death of the person he either is very anxious to see, or loves best, he may appear to that person. The thought becomes objective; the double, or shadow of a man, being nothing but the faithful reproduction of him, like a reflection in a mirror, that which the man does, even in thought, that the double repeats. This is why the phantoms are often seen in such cases in the clothes they wear at the particular moment, and the *image* reproduces even the expression on the dying man's face. If the double of a man bathing were seen it would seem to be immersed in water; so when a man who has been drowned appears to his friend, the image will be seen to be dripping with water. The cause for the apparition may be also reversed; *i. e.*, the dying man may or may not be thinking at all of the particular person his image appears to, but it is that person who is sensitive. Or perhaps his sympathy or his hatred for the individual whose wraith is thus evoked is very intense physically or psychically; and in this case the apparition is created by, and depends upon, the intensity of the thought. What then happens is this. Let us call the dying man A, and him who sees the double B. The latter, owing to love, hate, or fear, has the image of A so deeply impressed on his psychic memory, that actual magnetic attraction and repulsion are established between the two, whether one knows of it and feels it, or not. When A dies, the sixth sense or psychic spiritual intelligence of the *inner man* in B becomes cognisant of the change in A, and forthwith apprizes the physical senses of the man, by projecting before his eye the form of A, as it is at the instant of the great change. The same when the dying man longs to see some one; *his* thought telegraphs to his friend, consciously or unconsciously along the wire of sympathy, and becomes objective. This is what the "Spookical" Research Society would pompously, but none the less muddily, call *telepathic impact.*

M. C. This applies to the simplest form of the appearance of the double. What about cases in which the double does that which is contrary to the feeling and wish of the man?

H. P. B. This is impossible. The "Double" cannot act, unless the key-note of this action was struck in the brain of the man to whom the "Double" belongs, be that man just dead, or alive, in good or in bad health. If he paused on the thought a second, long enough to give it form, before he passed on to other mental pictures, this one second is as sufficient for the *objectivizations* of his personality on the astral waves, as for your face to impress itself on the sensitized plate of a photographic apparatus. Nothing prevents your form then, being seized upon by the surrounding Forces—as a dry leaf fallen from a tree is taken up and carried away by the wind—be made to caricature or distort your thought.

M. C. Supposing the double expresses in actual words a thought uncongenial to the man, and expresses it—let us say to a

friend far away, perhaps on another continent? I have known instances of this occurring.

H. P. B. Because it then so happens, that the created image is taken up and used by a "Shell." Just as in séance-rooms when "images" of the dead—which may perhaps be lingering unconsciously in the memory or even the auras of those present—are seized upon by the Elementals or Elementary Shadows and made objective to the audience, and even caused to act at the bidding of the strongest of the many different wills in the room. In your case, moreover, there must exist a connecting link—a telegraph wire—between the two persons, a point of psychic sympathy, and on this the thought travels instantly. Of course there must be, in every case, some strong reason why that particular thought takes that direction; it must be connected in some way with the other person. Otherwise such apparitions would be of common and daily occurrence.

M. C. This seems very simple; why then does it only occur with exceptional persons?

H. P. B. Because the plastic power of the imagination is much stronger in some persons than in others. The mind is dual in its potentiality: it is physical and metaphysical. The higher part of the mind is connected with the spiritual soul or Buddhi, the lower with the animal soul, the Kama principle. There are persons who never think with the higher faculties of their mind at all; those who do so are the minority and are thus, in a way, *beyond*, if not above, the average of human kind. These will think even upon ordinary matters on that *higher* plane. The idiosyncracy of the person determines in which "principle" of the mind the thinking is done, as also the faculties of a preceding life, and sometimes the heredity of the physical. This is why it is so very difficult for a materialist—the metaphysical portion of whose brain is almost atrophied—to raise himself, or for one who is naturally spiritually minded, to descend to the level of the matter-of-fact vulgar thought. Optimism and pessimism depend on it also in a large measure.

M. C. But the habit of thinking in the higher mind can be developed—else there would be no hope for persons who wish to alter their lives and raise themselves? And that this is possible must be true, or there would be no hope for the world.

H. P. B. Certainly it can be developed, but only with great difficulty, a firm determination, and through much self-sacrifice. But it is comparatively easy for those who are born with the gift. Why is it that one person sees poetry in a cabbage or a pig with her little ones, while another will perceive in the loftiest things only their lowest and most material aspect, will laugh at the "music of the spheres," and ridicule the most sublime conceptions and philosophies? This difference depends simply on the innate power of the mind to think on the higher or on the lower plane, with the *astral* (in the sense given to the word by St. Martin,) or with the physical brain. Great intellectual powers are often no proof of, but are impediments to spiritual and right conceptions; witness

most of the great men of science. We must rather pity than blame them.

M. C. But how is it that the person who thinks on the higher plane produces more perfect and more potential images and objective forms by his thought?

H. P. B. Not necessarily that "person" alone, but all those who are generally sensitives. The person who is endowed with this faculty of thinking about even the most trifling things from the higher plane of thought has, by virtue of that gift which he possesses, a plastic power of formation, so to say, in his very imagination. Whatever such a person may think about, his thought will be so far more intense than the thought of an ordinary person, that by this very intensity it obtains the power of creation. Science has established the fact that thought is an energy. This energy in its action disturbs the atoms of the astral atmosphere around us. I already told you; the rays of thought have the same potentiality for producing forms in the astral atmosphere as the sunrays have with regard to a lens. Every thought so evolved with energy from the brain, creates *nolens volens* a shape.

M. C. Is that shape absolutely unconscious?

H. P. B. Perfectly unconscious unless it is the creation of an adept, who has a pre-conceived object in giving it consciousness, or rather in sending along with it enough of his will and intelligence to cause it to appear conscious. This ought to make us more cautious about our thoughts.

But the wide distinction that obtains between the adept in this matter and the ordinary man must be borne in mind. The adept may at his will use his *Mayavi rupa,* but the ordinary man does not, except in very rare cases. It is called *Mayavi rupa* because it is a form of illusion created for use in the particular instance, and it has quite enough of the adept's mind in it to accomplish its purpose. The ordinary man merely creates a thought-image, whose properties and powers are at the time wholly unknown to him.

M. C. Then one may say that the form of an adept appearing at a distance from his body, as for instance Ram Lal in *Mr. Isaacs,* is simply an image?

H. P. B. Exactly. It is a walking thought.

M. C. In which case an adept can appear in several places almost simultaneously.

H. P. B. He can. Just as Apolonnius of Tyana, who was seen in two places at once, while his body was at Rome. But it must be understood that not *all* of even the *astral* adept is present in each appearance.

M. C. Then it is very necessary for a person of any amount of imagination and psychic powers to attend to their thoughts?

H. P. B. Certainly, for each thought has a shape which borrows the appearance of the man engaged in the action of which he thought. Otherwise how can clairvoyants see in your *aura* your past and present? What they see is a passing panorama of yourself represented in successive actions by your thoughts. You asked me

if we are punished for our thoughts. Not for all, for some are still-born; but for the others, those which we call "silent" but potential thoughts—yes. Take an extreme case, such as that of a person who is so wicked as to wish the death of another. Unless the evil-wisher is a *Dugpa,* a high adept in black magic, in which case Karma is delayed, such a wish only comes back to roost.

M. C. But supposing the evil-wisher to have a very strong will, without being a *dugpa,* could the death of the other be accomplished?

H. P. B. Only if the malicious person has the evil eye, which simply means possessing enormous plastic power of imagination working involuntarily, and thus turned unconsciously to bad uses. For what is the power of the "evil eye?" Simply a great plastic power of thought, so great as to produce a current impregnated with the potentiality of every kind of misfortune and accident, which inoculates, or attaches itself to any person who comes within it. A *jettatore* (one with the evil eye) need not be even imaginative, or have evil intentions or wishes. He may be simply a person who is naturally fond of witnessing or reading about sensational scenes, such as murder, executions, accidents, etc., etc. He may be not even thinking of any of these at the moment his eye meets his future victim. But the currents have been produced and exist in his visual ray ready to spring into activity the instant they find suitable soil, like a seed fallen by the way and ready to sprout at the first opportunity.

M. C. But how about the thoughts you call "silent?" Do such wishes or thoughts come home to roost?

H. P. B. They do; just as a ball which fails to penetrate an object rebounds upon the thrower. This happens even to some *dugpas* or sorcerers who are not strong enough, or do not comply with the rules—for even they have *rules* they have to abide by—but not with those who are regular, fully developed "black magicians;" for such have the power to accomplish what they wish.

M. C. When you speak of rules it makes me want to wind up this talk by asking you what everybody wants to know who takes any interest in occultism. What is a principal or important suggestion for those who have these powers and wish to control them rightly—in fact to enter occultism?

H. P. B. The first and most important step in occultism is to learn how to adapt your thoughts and ideas to your plastic potency.

M. C. Why is this so important?

H. P. B. Because otherwise you are creating things by which you may be making bad Karma. No one should go into occultism or even touch it before he is perfectly acquainted with his own powers, and that he knows how to commensurate it with his actions. And this he can do only by deeply studying the philosophy of Occultism before entering upon the *practical* training. Otherwise, as sure as fate—He Will Fall Into Black Magic.

(*To be continued.*)

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA*

(Continued from October Number.)

CHAPTER FIFTH.

The name of this chapter in Sanscrit is "Karmasanyasayog," which means "The Book of Religion by Renouncing Fruit of Works." It has always seemed to me to be one of the most important in the Bhagavad-Gita. As the poem is divided into eighteen parts, this one is just beyond the first division, for the whole number are to be put into six groups of three chapters each, and we have finished four.

Arjuna is supposed to bring forward the objections raised by, or views belonging to, the two great Indian schools called the Sankhya and the Yoga, one of which advised its votaries to renounce all works and to do nothing whatever, while the other called for the performance of works. The divergent views naturally caused great differences in practice, for the followers of one would be found continually working, and those of the other continually doing nothing. Hence we find, in India, even at the present day, great numbers of ascetics who remain inert, and encounter on the other hand those who go on making Karma with a view to salvation.

A very little reflection will show the student that the only result of action, as such, will be a continuation of action, and hence that no amount of mere works will in themselves confer Nirvana or rest from Karma. The only direct product of Karma is Karma. And this difficulty rose before Arjuna in the fifth conversation. He says:

> Thou praisest, Krishna, the renunciation of works; on the other hand, devotion through them. Declare to me with precision that one only which is the better of these two.

Whereupon Krishna replies:

> To cease from works
> Is well, and to do works in holiness
> Is well; and both conduct to bliss supreme;
> But of these twain the better way is his
> Who working piously refraineth not.
> That is the true Renouncer, firm and fixed,
> Who—seeking nought, rejecting nought—dwells proof
> Against the "opposites."

The meaning of the teacher has been by some suggested to be that, inasmuch as the life of the ascetic is very hard, almost impossible for the majority of men, it is wiser to now perform good acts in the hope that they will lead one hereafter to a favorable birth in such surroundings that complete renunciation of action—outwardly—will be an easy task, and that the two sorts of practice were not intended to be laid before the student for selection, nor is he put in a dilemma compelling him to choose. I think such is not the meaning, but that, on the contrary, the seemingly easy alternative of performing actions properly is in reality the most

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difficult of all tasks. And, no matter how much we may wait for a favorable birth, for a much hoped-for environment which will not only permit the new sort of life, but, in fact, urge it upon us, it will never arrive for us until we have learned what is the right performance of action. This learning can never be acquired by a renunciation of works now. Indeed, it may be taken for granted that no person will be able to renounce the world unless he has passed through the other experience in some life. A few may be found who attempt to do so, but if they have not been through all action they cannot proceed. The character of the man himself inwardly is the real test. No matter how many times during countless births he has renounced the world, if his inner nature has not renounced, he will be the same man during the entire period, and whenever, in any one of his ascetic lives, the new, the appropriate temptation or circumstance arises, he will fall from his high outward asceticism.

That our view as to the extreme difficulty of *right renunciation through action* is correct, we may refer to what Krishna says further on in the chapter.

> Yet such abstraction, Chief!
> Is hard to win without much holiness.

Krishna praises both schools, telling Arjuna that the disciples of each will arrive at a like end; but he says that right performance of action is the better. Now we must reconcile these two. If one is better than the other and yet both conduct to the same goal, there must be some reason for making the comparison, or hopeless confusion results. Acting upon his apparent equal endorsement, many seekers have abandoned action, thereby hoping to gain salvation. They ignored the sixth verse, which reads: "O thou of mighty arms, it is difficult to attain true renunciation *without right performance of action;* the devotee *rightly performing action attains to true renunciation* before long." Here again is a higher place assigned to performance of action. It seems clear that what Krishna meant was that renunciation of action in any one life, followed by the same conduct in all the subsequent lives thereby affected, would at last lead the renouncer to see how he must begin to stop that kind of renunciation and take up the performance of actions while he renounced the fruit of them. This is thought by many occultists to be the true view. It is well known that the ego returning to regeneration is affected by the actions of his previous births, not only circumstantially in the various vicissitudes of a life, but also in the tendency of the nature to any particular sort of religious practice, and this effect operates for a length of time or number of births exactly commensurate with the intensity of the previous practice. And naturally in the case of one who deliberately renounced all in the world, devoting himself to asceticism for many years, the effect would be felt for many lives and long after other temporary impressions had worn off. In going on thus for so many

births, the man at last acquires that clearness of inner sight which brings him to perceive what method he really ought to follow. Besides also the natural development, he will be assisted by those minds whom he is sure to encounter, who have passed through all the needed experience. Additional support for these suggestions is found in the sixth chapter, in the verses referring to the rebirth of such disciples:

> So hath he back what heights of heart
> He did achieve, and so he strives anew
> To perfectness, with better hope, dear Prince!
> *For by the old desire he is drawn on*
> *Unwittingly.*[1]

What we are to endeavor to understand, then, is how to renounce the fruit of our actions, which is what Krishna means when he tells us to perform actions as a renunciation. The polluting effect of an act is not in the nature of the mere thing done, nor is the purifying result due to what work we may do, but on either hand the sin or the merit is found in the inner feeling that accompanies the act. One may donate millions in alms, and yet not thereby benefit his real character in the least. It is very true that he will reap material rewards, perhaps in some other life, but those even will be of no benefit, since he will be still the same. And another may only give away kind words or small sums, because that is all he has to give, and be so much benefited by the feeling accompanying each act that his progress up the ascending arc toward union with spirit is rapid. We find in the Christian Testament Jesus of Nazareth enforcing this view in the parable of the widow's mite, which he regarded as of more value than all that had been given by others. He could not have referred to the intrinsic value of the coin given, nor to the act as thus measured, for that quantity was easily ascertained; he only looked to the inner feeling of the poor woman when she gave all that she had.

No matter in what direction we see ourselves acting, we perceive how difficult it is to be true renouncers. And we cannot hope to reach the perfection of this better sort of renunciation through action, in the present life, be it the one in which we have begun, or be it the twentieth of such effort. However, we can *try*, and such is our duty; if we persevere, the tendency toward the right understanding will increase with each life more rapidly than would otherwise be possible.

And even in the high aim found in aspiration to discipleship under a master, or even to Adeptship, we encounter the same difficulty. This aspiration is commendable above most that we can formulate, but when we coldly ask ourselves soon after that aspiration has been formed, "Why am I thus aspiring; why do I want to be near in sense to the Master?", we are obliged to admit that the impelling motive for acquiring the aspiration was tinged with self-

[1]The italics are my own.—B.

ishness. We can easily prove this by inquiring in the forum of our own conscience if we had the aspiration for ourself or for the great mass of men, rich and poor, despicable and noble; would we be able to feel content were we suddenly told that our deep longing had given the boon to others and that we must wait ten lives more. It is safe to say that the answer would be that we were very sorry. In the twelfth verse we find the remedy for the difficulty, as well as the difficulty itself, clearly stated thus: "The right performer of action, abandoning fruit of action, attains to rest through devotion; the wrong performer of action, attached to fruit thereof on account of desire, remains bound."

These instructions will be very difficult for all who are living for themselves and who have not in some small degree begun to believe that they are not here for their own sake. But when we feel that there is no separation between us and any other creature, and that our Higher Self is leading us through all the experiences of life to the end that we shall recognize the unity of all, then, instead of continually acting contrary to that object of the Higher Self, we try to acquire the right belief and aspiration. Nor need we be deterred, as some are, by the extreme difficulty of eliminating the selfish desire for progress. That will be the task during many lives, and we should begin it voluntarily as soon as it is known, instead of waiting for it to be forced in upon us through suffering and many defeats.

A common mistake made by theosophical students as well as those outside is corrected in this chapter. It is the habit of many to say that, if these doctrines are followed to the letter, the result is a being who cares for nothing but the calmness which comes from extinction in the Supreme Spirit,—that is, the extreme of selfishness. And popular writers contribute to this ridiculous impression, as we can see in the numerous articles on the subject. Among those writers it is the sequence of the "personal aggrandizement idea," which is the bane of the present age, as occultists think, but the chief beauty of it in the eyes of those to whom we refer. Krishna puts it clearly enough in the twenty-fifth verse:

"Effacement in the Supreme Spirit is gained by the right-seeing sage whose sins are exhausted, who hath cut asunder all doubts, whose senses and organs are under control, and *who is devoted to the well-being of all creatures.*"

If the last qualification is absent, then he is not a "right-seeing sage" and cannot reach union with the Supreme. It must follow that the humblest imitator, every one who desires to come to that condition, must try to the best of his ability to imitate the sage who has succeeded. And such is the word of the Master; for He says in many places that, if we expect to have His help, we must apply ourselves to the work of helping humanity—to the extent of our ability. No more than this is demanded.

WILLIAM BREHON, F. T. S.

THE MEANING OF A PLEDGE.*

IT has been thought advisable that members of a certain Occult Lodge of the T. S. should have the meaning of the Pledge they are about to take laid before them as plainly as possible. At any rate, that those who have previously signed the Pledge shall lay before those who are about to do so all that they understand this Pledge to mean and what its signature involves.

The Pledge runs as follows:

"1. I pledge myself to endeavour to make Theosophy a living factor in my life.

"2. I pledge myself to support, before the world, the Theosophical movement, its leaders and its members.

"3. I pledge myself never to listen without protest to any evil thing spoken of a Brother Theosophist and to abstain from condemning others.

"4. I pledge myself to maintain a constant struggle against my lower nature, and to be charitable to the weaknesses of others.

"5. I pledge myself to do all in my power, by study or otherwise, to fit myself to help and teach others.

"6. I pledge myself to give what support I can to the movement in time, money, and work.

"So Help Me, My Higher Self."

It is at once plain that this is not a general Pledge like that which is taken so lightly by members of the Theosophical Society; but that it is a specific undertaking to do and to endeavour to do certain things. Also that it is given under an invocation:—

"So help me my Higher Self."

The term "Higher Self" has recently come into considerable use—at any rate so far as the Theosophical Society is concerned. To those who have studied the meaning of the words it is at once evident that to "take an oath" in the ordinary fashion of Christians is much less serious than a Pledge in presence of the "Higher Self."

The "Higher Self," moreover, is not a sort of sublimated essence of any one man; a sort of spiritualised "personality." *It* is universal and secondless and in such a sense the term "*my* Higher Self" seems misplaced. But every man, however dimly, is a manifestation of the Higher Self, and it is by the connection of the Jiva, the Monad, with the secondless "Higher Self" that it is possible to use the term. What then does the invocation mean?

The man who takes this Pledge in the right spirit calls upon It, and calls every help and blessing from It to his assistance. By an intense desire to be under Its protection he (though It *per se*

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is latent and passive) places himself under the protection of the active and beneficent powers that are the direct rays of the Absolute Higher Secondless Self.

But if a man takes this Pledge and betrays his Higher Self, he risks every evil and *brings it upon himself*. Thus then, he who remains true to the Pledge has nothing to fear; but he who has no confidence in himself to keep the Pledge when taken, had better leave it and, much more, leave Occultism alone.

Breaking this Pledge cannot, then, involve penalty on the "Higher Self," but it can affect the individual man. The "Higher Self" is immortal, but the Monad exists as a separate individual only during the Manvantaras, and around it various personalities are formed. This incarnates at every new birth, and not only can be, but is, punished if such a Pledge is broken. Once that it has progressed far enough to recognise the glorious light of the Higher Self and desire to live in it, the breaking of the Pledge tends towards a condition which would preclude the possibility of that light not only benefitting the Monad, but even reaching it.

Thus all men are in the presence of two forces in nature. One of them active and beneficent, whose aid and assistance is directly invoked by the Pledge; the other active, but maleficent, which is represented by beings who have a distinct interest in preventing the operation of the Pledge, and in hindering the work of the Theosophical Society. We see this more clearly when we know that we Pledge ourselves *to be* active, and not merely to endeavour to be.

Further, there are powers on the earth and in the flesh, as well as in the astral light, who desire to prevent and hinder the Pledge from taking effect. Some of these act consciously in this manner, and others because they are driven to such conscious action, but without any knowledge of the reason or force which drives them thereto.

We are to endeavour to "make Theosophy a living factor in our lives." Before we can *endeavour* to do this, much less *do* it effectually, we must first understand what Theosophy is, and actually define to ourselves what we individually mean by Theosophy. Now it is exactly this definition, its want, and our ignorance generally which hitherto has prevented us from carrying out this endeavour. Nothing need here be said of the Theosophical Society and the benefit which would come to it by even a small section of its members actually making Theosophy *the* living factor in their lives. Very few do so, and it is only too true that a member of the Theosophical Society is not necessarily a Theosophist. But those who take this Pledge are not content to remain nominally members of the Society, but aspire to be Theosophists indeed. And therefore it is so necessary that all should learn what a Theosophist is, and what any man must do to make Theosophy a *living* factor in his life.

As a negative definition nothing could be better than the definition in Lucifer No. 3:

"He who does not practise altruism; he who is not prepared to share his last morsel with a weaker or poorer than himself; he who neglects to help his brother man, of whatever race, nation, or creed, whenever and wherever he meets suffering, and who turns a deaf ear to the cry of human misery; he who hears an innocent person slandered, whether a brother Theosophist or not, and does not undertake his defence as he would undertake his own—is no Theosophist."

But this definition also contains the positive side. It is not sufficient merely to abstain from doing that which is condemned in this definition. The negative side alone is useless to those who take this Pledge—and not merely useless, for it involves practically the breaking of the Pledge. The Pledge demands not only that the man who takes it shall abstain from evil doing but, more, that he shall *positively* work altruistically and defend any innocent person as he would himself.

Many men may be so colourless as not to offend against the negative clauses of the Pledge and definition; but few are they who are sufficiently positive in their own character as not only not to offend against these clauses but also work in the opposite direction. For the greatest importance does not consist in "I will not" but in the "I will do." Thus some strength is needed for impersonality. This impersonality is of two kinds, negative and positive. For the negative, strength is needed to fight against the forces of heredity and education, and prevent obedience to the instincts and acquired habits of this and other incarnations. But greater strength is needed to cross the zero-point and create new instincts and habits in the midst of conditions of life and habits of thought which are violently opposed to the new creation. And it would seem that strength is required so that it would be possible to conquer the tendencies of a devil and grow up into divinity. And if we regard the Pledge generally it would seem to be an admirable instrument, in view of the above quoted definition, for finding out and assailing everybody on their weak points. As men and women the Pledge compels us to refrain from acting and thinking in our daily life as our education has hitherto compelled us to do. If we do not so refrain, we do not make Theosophy a living factor in our lives. And more, while we are engaged in this difficult task, the positive side appears and we are told that we have to do other things as difficult—otherwise we are not Theosophists.

The second clause of the Pledge will prove a stumbling block to many lukewarm members of the Theosophical Society. Many may be in complete accord with the objects of the Theosophical Society, so far as they understand them, but also be in complete disagreement with the leaders of the Society and their method of

work. Not only may they disagree but also be in either open or concealed hostility to those leaders and many of the members. It is of no use to disguise from ourselves the fact that this has been the case, and unfortunately may be so again. We work for "Universal Brotherhood" and we are at enmity with our immediate neighbours. This then we pledge ourselves to put a stop to, and to excise the tendency from our natures. Thus Clause 2 has a special reference to certain persons arising out of the general circumstances.

The question naturally arises: "Of what use is a Theosophical Society with such aims, when it is composed of such diverse elements?" And again: "Has the Society any coherence and purpose which shall make *it* a living power in the society by which it is surrounded?" For an analogy exists; and the Society is an individual among societies, just as men and women are individuals. And it may here be emphatically stated that the power and force of any given body is not the total force of its component units, but that the body has an individual force and power of its own apart from them. One has but to turn to the chemistry of "alloys" to see that this is true. If then we regard the Society, it does not seem that any of its strength is due to the united purpose and action of its individual members. But it has a great purpose, and to this a certain number of devoted individuals have sacrificed all that lay in their power. Among these the founders and present leaders of the Society are notable examples. The result is that the Society continues to exist exoterically. But the continued existence of the Society is not due to these few individual efforts alone but to the underlying influence of those under whose direction the Society was founded by its present leaders, and to the fostering care of those Masters in Wisdom, after it was founded.

Clause 3 opens out to many, as the Society is at present constituted, a good deal of casuistical reasoning. It has been said, and it would seem truly said, that it is perfectly open to those who are true Theosophists to condemn an act but not the actor. But this will be found to be a distinction which is very subtle and difficult to make in life. "Light on the Path," too, warns the aspirant against self-righteousness of a like character, "for the soiled garment you shrink from touching may have been yours yesterday, may be yours to-morrow." Thus those who take this Pledge are about to meet a very subtle difficulty (for in life the act and the actor are indissolubly connected,) unless they have attained the power of observing and reading on a plane which is at present beyond the reach of the majority of mankind. However, even if this power is beyond reach at present, it is at all events right for those who aspire to be Theosophists to try. We can at least put a bridle on our physical lips and endeavour to do so on our mind, and thus abstain from "condemning others." For the silent condemnation of the mind would seem more "vicious" than physical

speech, for, at any rate in the "judge," it is a form of moral cowardice. And herein lies the casuistry. For apart from the definition in Lucifer, No. 3, it has been open to those who take the Pledge to consider that their human brothers are not "Brother Theosophists," and therefore that it is legal to judge and condemn. Thus if it could be clearly proven that any man or woman has erred against the said definition it might be possible to receive absolution from the pledge "never to listen without protest to any evil thing spoken" of them. But the definition stops this with its "whether a brother Theosophist or not," and agrees with the legal maxim which is so seldom acted upon—always to consider a man innocent until proved guilty. Suspicion is a dangerous guest to harbour, and we are finally brought back to the fact that it is best to "judge not that ye be not judged."

Clauses 4 and 5 are the completion of resolutions which go straight to the centre of all that militates against Theosophy and against its forming a living factor in men's lives. In this sense Clause 6 is a completion also. But the power to help and teach others can only be found in the united spirit of life, which is a spirit of absolute equality and in the sense that to the Theosophist every man is a teacher.

Clause 6 is a ratification of all that has gone before, but places it in more definite terms.

Thus then before this Pledge is taken it is necessary for all who aspire to take it to carefully ascertain, before pledging themselves to work and activity for Theosophy, what Theosophy really is. Is Theosophy identical with the practice of the Theosophical Society? If it is not, ought it to be? Shall I endeavour to make it so? In pledging myself to work for it, am I in the near or distant future, in this or in some succeeding incarnation, looking for a reward? It would then seem that one of the first requisites is to endeavour to "Know Thyself."

Such a Pledge must not be taken lightly nor in a spirit of mere emotionalism. It has to be taken with a stern resolution to ever and ever more fully carry out its requirements, even at all costs to the man who takes it. It is taken at the risk of the man who takes it in a thoughtless spirit without examining what it really means and without the intention of making its fulfilment the supreme object of his life.

It is necessary "to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" the truths which exist in Theosophy and then perhaps there may dawn upon the world the day when all men shall be as brothers, and Universal Brotherhood shall be a reality and the guide of all existence.

One Who Is Pledged.

CONSCIOUSNESS*

CONSCIOUSNESS is the seat of the real life of the human individual. The mere carrying on of his bodily functions is not his life. Those functions are the channels and avenues through which his real being has communion with the phenomenal world, and with other units of consciousness similar to his own. Through them his life is greatly affected; by their means his thoughts are fed, his feelings modified, his actions suggested. But let us consider the modes in which consciousness may work, and the specific forms in which it may manifest itself. Observation of human modes and objects of life indicates three classes of consciousness. In other words, there are three modes of existence which the consciousness of an individual may fall into, or work itself into, and the adoption of the particular mode, knowingly and deliberately, or the contrary, determines the character and intrinsic value of the consciousness.

The elementary or simplest mode of consciousness we designate as *lineal*. In this, the feelings, thoughts, and energies of the individual lie not only on one plane but merely in one direction on that plane.

The consciousness which belongs to this class is limited to the faculty of moving *backwards or forwards in a straight line*. It is bound like a railway train to its special track. This form of consciousness is very common. It is the lot of those who have only one aim in life, and that a personal one. Whatever the chief aim of the life may be, whether that of the shopkeeper, merely to earn money, or of the professional man in his special sphere, or of society men and women, in their incessant flittings to and fro in the whirl of pleasure and excitement, it matters nothing; the consciousness, which is the essence of the individual, exercises itself and possesses power only in the limited sphere described. It is simply necessary to look around to observe many examples of this class. A very large number of men and women of the present day belong to it.

In the second class the consciousness enjoys a wider freedom.

The dimensions of the realm over which it rules lie in two directions; for, in addition to backward and forward movement, the consciousness may traverse regions that lie to the right and to the left.

This form of consciousness we shall term the *superficial*; it has length and breadth, but no depth. It is the possession of those who, while devoted to one special employment which absorbs their chief energies, also occupy themselves, as adjuncts of life, in other spheres having for them a particular interest. This consciousness predominates largely amongst men and women who, following a daily avocation to supply the main needs of life, have sufficient mental or emotional activity to lead them into secondary engagements that exercise thought or fulfil an aim. The persons possessing this form of consciousness are active and seem to follow a purpose, though the purpose may not be noble or of intrinsic value.

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Naturally, this consciousness enjoys much more of life than the form belonging to the class designated as lineal. Men of business, not wholly immersed in the getting of money, clergymen and ministers of wise sympathies, teachers not limited to one peculiar tendency of thought, and persons whose lives generally are useful and active, are those who belong to the second class of superficial consciousness.

The consciousness, the nature of which remains to be described, is of vastly greater extent than either of the two classes already discussed.

Its dimensions lie in three directions. Not only does it exist in all directions superficially, but it further penetrates below the surface in possessing the quality of *depth*. It is true that the superficial area may vary in extent. This may appear, to the observer, but limited, or it may seem to spread far and wide, but the circumstance of depth in its nature and extent will be recognised only by the few, and not even by them to its full extent. The territory below the surface can neither be seen nor gauged, except by the faculties of a consciousness of similar nature. In the depth of an object there is capacity for substance, and consciousness is of a nature so real that wherever it exists in depth it is as true substance. The objects with which the lineal and superficial forms of consciousness deal are but of temporal character and will pass away, but those that are the possession of the solid form are secure beyond possibility of removal.

Within that deep region, and corresponding to its intricacy and in the extent to which it penetrates, there are tracks of infinite variety and number.

In exploring these, the consciousness may find unending employment. This class of consciousness gives to the world those men from whom it learns, whose depth of nature is the abyss from which spring fountains and rills that irrigate life, and turn its wheels, and cause it to be fruitful.

Such men are the richest of earthly beings; their wealth is inexhaustible and imperishable. That depth, in which their consciousness revels, belongs to another world than that of ordinary human existence; it is the universe of eternal and infinite life, of which they are already subjects.

The first-named form of consciousness we should term sensuous, or that which operates merely through the senses and the nervous system; the second form we should call the intellectual or inner-sensuous; the third form is the spiritual or super-sensuous.

Sensuous consciousness delights merely in the external forms of objects and receives impressions only from those forms as they are found.

Intellectual consciousness finds its exciting cause not so much in the forms of external objects as in their movements and the effects of those movements upon the objects themselves.

The spiritual consciousness moves amidst the *hidden causes* of the sensuous and intellectual.

THE THREE DESIRES*

THE first three of the numbered rules of "Light on the Path" must appear somewhat of an unequal character to bracket together. The sense in which they follow each other is purely spiritual. Ambition is the highest point of personal activity reached by the mind, and there is something noble in it, even to an Occultist. Having conquered the desire to stand above his fellows, the restless aspirant, in seeking what his personal desires are, finds the thirst for life stand next in his way. For all that are ordinarily classed as desires have long since been subjugated, passed by, or forgotten, before this pitched battle of the soul is begun. The desire for life is entirely a desire of the spirit, not mental at all; and in facing it a man begins to face his own soul. But very few have even attempted to face it; still fewer can guess at all at its meaning.

The connection between ambition and the desire of life is of this kind. Men are seldom really ambitious in whom the animal passions are strong. What is taken for ambition in men of powerful physique is more often merely the exercise of great energy in order to obtain full gratification of all physical desires. Ambition pure and simple is the struggle of the mind upwards, the exercise of a native intellectual force which lifts a man altogether above his peers. To rise—to be pre-eminent in some special manner, in some department of art, science, or thought, is the keenest longing of delicate and highly-tuned minds. It is quite a different thing from the thirst for knowledge which makes of a man a student always—a learner to the end, however great he may become. Ambition is born of no love for anything for its own sake, but purely for the sake of oneself. "It is I that will know, I that will rise, and by my own power."

> "Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition;
> By that sin fell the angels."

The place-seeking for which the word was originally used, differs in degree, not in kind, from that more abstract meaning now generally attached to it. A poet is considered ambitious when he writes for fame. It is true; so he is. He may not be seeking a place at court, but he is certainly seeking the highest place he knows of. Is it conceivable that any great author could really be anonymous, and remain so? The human mind revolts against the theory of the Baconian authorship of Shakespeare's works, not only because it deprives the world of a splendid figure, but also because it makes of Bacon a monster, unlike all other human beings. To the ordinary intelligence it is inconceivable that a man should hide his light in this purposeless manner. Yet it is conceivable to an occultist that a great poet might be inspired by one greater than himself, who would stand back entirely from the world and all

* This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for February, 1888.

contact with it. This inspirer would not only have conquered ambition but also the abstract desire for life, before he could work vicariously to so great an extent. For he would part with his work for ever when once it had gone to the world; it would never be his. A person who can imagine making no claim on the world, neither desiring to take pleasure from it nor to give pleasure to it, can dimly apprehend the condition which the occultist has reached when he no longer desires to live. Do not suppose this to mean that he neither takes nor gives pleasure; he does both, as also he lives. A great man, full of work and thought, eats his food with pleasure; he does not dwell on the prospect of it, and linger over the memory, like the gluttonous child, or the gourmand pure and simple. This is a very material image, yet sometimes these simple illustrations serve to help the mind more than any others. It is easy to see, from this analogy, that an advanced occultist who has work in the world may be perfectly free from the desires which would make him a part of it, and yet may take its pleasures and give them back with interest. He is enabled to give more pleasure than he takes, because he is incapable of fear or disappointment. He has no dread of death, nor of that which is called annihilation. He rests on the waters of life, submerged and sleeping, or above them and conscious, indifferently. He cannot feel disappointment, because although pleasure is to him intensely vivid and keen, it is the same to him whether he enjoys it himself or whether another enjoys it. It is pleasure, pure and simple, untarnished by personal craving or desire. So with regard to what occultists call "progress"—the advance from stage to stage of knowledge. In a school of any sort in the external world emulation is the great spur to progress. The occultist, on the contrary, is incapable of taking a single step until he has acquired the faculty of realizing progress as an abstract fact. Someone must draw nearer to the Divine in every moment of life; there must always be progress. But the disciple who desires that he shall be the one to advance in the next moment, may lay aside all hope of it. Neither should he be conscious of preferring progress for another or of any kind of vicarious sacrifice. Such ideas are in a certain sense unselfish, but they are essentially characteristic of the world in which separateness exists, and form is regarded as having a value of its own. The shape of a man is as much an *eidolon* as though no spark of divinity inhabited it; at any moment that spark may desert the particular shape, and we are left with a substantial shadow of the man we knew. It is in vain, after the first step in occultism has been taken, that the mind clings to the old beliefs and certainties. Time and space are known to be non-existent, and are only regarded as existing in practical life for the sake of convenience. So with the separation of the divine-human spirit into the multitudes of men on the earth. Roses have their own colours, and lilies theirs; none can tell why this is when the same sun, the same light, gives the colour to each. Nature is indivisible. She clothes the earth, and when that clothing is torn away, she bides her time and re-clothes it again when there

is no more interference with her. Encircling the earth like an atmosphere, she keeps it always glowing and green, moistened and sunlit. The spirit of man encompasses the earth like a fiery spirit, living on Nature, devouring her, sometimes being devoured by her, but always in the mass remaining more ethereal and sublime than she is. In the individual, man is conscious of the vast superiority of Nature; but when once he becomes conscious that he is part of an indivisible and indestructible whole, he knows also that the whole of which he is part stands above nature. The starry sky is a terrible sight to a man who is just self-less enough to be aware of his own littleness and unimportance as an individual; it almost crushes him. But let him once touch on the power which comes from knowing himself as part of the human spirit, and nothing can crush him by its greatness. For if the wheels of the chariot of the enemy pass over his body, he forgets that it is his body, and rises again to fight among the crowd of his own army. But this state can never be reached, nor even approached, until the last of the three desires is conquered, as well as the first. They must be apprehended and encountered together.

Comfort, in the language used by occultists, is a very comprehensive word. It is perfectly useless for a neophyte to practice discomfort or asceticism as do religious fanatics. He may come to prefer deprivation in the end, and then it has become his comfort. Homelessness is a condition to which the religious Brahmin pledges himself; and in the external religion he is considered to fulfill this pledge if he leaves wife and child, and becomes a begging wanderer, with no shelter of his own to return to. But all external forms of religion are forms of comfort, and men take vows of abstinence in the same spirit that they take pledges of boon companionship. The difference between these two sides of life is only apparent. But the homelessness which is demanded of the neophyte is a much more vital thing than this. It demands the surrender from him of choice or desire. Dwelling with wife and child, under the shelter of a familiar roof-tree, and fulfilling the duties of citizenship, the neophyte may be far more homeless, in the esoteric sense, than when he is a wanderer or an outcast. The first lesson in practical occultism usually given to a pledged disciple is that of fulfilling the duties immediately to hand with the same subtle mixture of enthusiasm and indifference as the neophyte would imagine himself able to feel when he had grown to the size of a ruler of worlds and a designer of destinies. This rule is to be found in the Gospels and in the Bhagavad Gita. The immediate work, whatever it may be, has the abstract claim of duty, and its relative importance or non-importance is not to be considered at all. This law can never be obeyed until all desire of comfort is forever destroyed. The ceaseless assertions and re-assertions of the personal self must be left behind forever. They belong as completely to the character of this world as does the desire to have a certain balance at the bank, or to retain the affections of a loved

person. They are equally subject to the change which is characteristic of this world; indeed, they are even more so, for what the neophyte does by becoming a neophyte is simply to enter a forcing-house. Change, disillusionment, disheartenment, despair will crowd upon him by invitation; for his wish is to learn his lessons quickly. And as he turns these evils out they will probably be replaced by others worse than themselves—a passionate longing for separate life, for sensation, for the consciousness of growth in his own self, will rush in upon him and sweep over the frail barriers which he has raised. And no such barriers as asceticism, as renunciation, nothing indeed which is negative, will stand for a single moment against this powerful tide of feeling. The only barrier is built up of new desires. For it is perfectly useless for the neophyte to imagine he can get beyond the region of desires. He cannot; he is still a man; Nature must bring forth flowers while she is still Nature, and the human spirit would loose its hold on this form of existence altogether did it not continue to desire. The individual man cannot wrench himself instantly out of that life of which he is an essential part. He can only change his position in it. The man whose intellectual life dominates his animal life, changes his position; but he is still in the dominion of desire. The disciple who believes it possible to become selfless in a single effort, will find himself flung into a bottomless pit as the consequence of his rash endeavour. Seize upon a new order of desires, purer, wider, nobler; and so plant your foot upon the ladder firmly. It is only on the last and topmost rung of the ladder, at the very entrance upon Divine or Mahatmic life, that it is possible to hold fast to that which has neither substance or existence.

The first part of "Light on the Path" is like a chord in music; the notes have to be struck together though they must be touched separately. Study and seize hold of the new desires before you have thrust out the old ones; otherwise in the storm you will be lost. Man while he is man has substance and needs some step to stand on, some idea to cling to. But let it be the least possible. Learn as the acrobat learns, slowly and with care, to become more independent. Before you attempt to cast out the devil of ambition—the desire of something, however fine and elevated, outside of yourself,—seize on the desire to find the light of the world within yourself. Before you attempt to cast out the desire of conscious life, learn to look to the unattainable or in other language to that which you know you can only reach in unconsciousness. In knowing that your aim is of this lofty character, that it will never bring conscious success, never bring comfort to you, that it will never carry you *in your own temporary personal self* to any haven of rest or place of agreeable activity, you cut away all the force and power of the desires of the lower astral nature. For what avail is it, when these facts have been once realised, to desire separateness, sensation or growth?

The armour of the warrior who rises to fight for you in the battle depicted in the second part of "Light on the Path," is like the shirt of the happy man in the old story. The king was to be cured of all his ills by sleeping in this shirt; but when the one happy man in his kingdom was found, he was a beggar, without care, without anxiety—and shirtless. So with the divine warrior. None can take his armour and use it, for he has none. The king could never find happiness like that of the careless beggar. The man of the world, however fine and cultivated he may be, is hampered by a thousand thoughts and feelings which have to be cast aside before he can even stand on the threshold of occultism. And, be it observed, he is chiefly handicapped by the armour he wears, which isolates him. He has personal pride, personal respect. These things must die out as the personality recedes. The process described in the first part of "Light on the Path," is one which takes off that shell, or armour, and casts it aside forever. Then the warrior arises, armourless, defenceless, offenceless, identified with the afflicters and the afflicted, the angered and the one that angers; fighting not on any side, but for the Divine, the highest in all.

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM WITH H. P. B.*

In 1875, '76, '77, and '78 my intimacy with H. P. B. gave me many opportunities for conversing with her on what we then called "Magic". These useful, and for me very wonderful, occasions came about late at night, and sometimes during the day. I was then in the habit of calling on her in the day-time whenever I could get away from my office. Many times I stayed in her flat for the purpose of hearing as much and seeing as much as I could. Later on, in 1884, I spent many weeks with her in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs in Paris, sitting beside her day after day and evening after evening; later still, in 1888, being with her in London, at Holland Park, I had a few more opportunities. Some of what she said I publish here for the good of those who can benefit by her words. Certainly no greater practical occultist is known to this century: from that point of view what she said will have a certain useful weight with some.

ON DEVACHAN.

This term was not in use at this time. The conversation was about steps on the Path and returning here again. In answer to a question:

"Yes, you have been here and at this before. You were born with this tendency, and in other lives have met these persons [supposed Adept influences], and they are here to see you for that reason."

*This article was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path* for April, 1894.

Later, when definite terms had come into use, the question raised was whether or not all stayed 1500 years in Devachan.

"Well, Judge, you must know well that under the philosophy we don't all stay there so long. It varies with the character of each. A thoroughly material thinker will emerge sooner than one who is a spiritual philosopher and good. Besides, recollect that all workers for the Lodge, no matter of what degree, are helped out of Devachan if they themselves permit it. Your own idea which you have stated, that 1500 years had not elapsed since you went into Devachan, is correct, and that I tell is what Master himself tells me. So there you are."

PRECIPITATIONS BY MASTERS.

In reply to a question on this she said:

"If you think Master is going to be always precipitating things, you mistake. Yes, He can do it. But most of the precipitations are by chelas who would seem to you almost Masters. I see His orders, and the thoughts and words He wishes used, and I precipitate them in that form; so does * * * and one or two more."

"Well, what of Their handwritings?"

"Anything you write is your handwriting, but it is not your personal handwriting, generally used and first learned if you assume or adopt some form. Now you know that Masters' handwritings, peculiar and personal to Themselves, are foreign both as to sound and form—Indian sorts, in fact. So They adopted a form in English, and in that form I precipitate Their messages at Their direction. Why B— almost caught me one day and nearly made a mess of it by shocking me. The message has to be seen in the astral light in *fac-simile,* and through that astral matrix I precipitate the whole of it. It's different, though, if Master sends me the paper and the message already done. That's why I call these things 'psychological tricks.' The sign of an objective wonder seemed to be required, although a moment's thought will show it is not proof of anything but occult ability. Many a medium has had precipitations before my miserable self was heard of. But blessed is the one who wants no sign. You have seen plenty of these things. Why do you want to ask me? Can't you use your brain and intuition? I've sampled almost the whole possible range of wonders for you. Let them use their brains and intuition with the known facts and the theories given."

IF WHITE MAGICIANS ACT, WHAT THEN?

"Look here; here's a man who wants to know why the Masters don't interpose at once and save his business. They don't seem to remember what it means for a Master to use occult force. If you explode gunpowder to split a rock you may knock down a house. There is a law that if a White Magician uses his occult power an equal amount of power may be used by the Black one. Chemists invent powders for explosives and wicked men may use them. You force yourself into Master's presence and you take the

consequences of the immense forces around him playing on yourself. If you are weak in character anywhere, the Black ones will use the disturbance by directing the forces engendered to that spot and may compass your ruin. It is so always. Pass the boundary that hedges in the occult realm, and quick forces, new ones, dreadful ones, must be met. Then if you are not strong you may become a wreck for that life. This is the danger. This is one reason why Masters do not appear and do not act directly very often, but nearly always by intermediate degrees. What do you say,—'the dual forces in nature'? Precisely, that's just it; and Theosophists should remember it."

DO MASTERS PUNISH.

"Now I'm not going to tell you all about this. They are just; They embody the Law and Compassion. Do not for an instant imagine that Masters are going to come down on you for your failures and wrongs, if any. Karma looks out for this. Masters' ethics are the highest. From the standpoint of your question They do not punish. Have I not told you that, much as detractors have cast mud at Them, never will the Masters impose punishment. I cannot see why such a question comes up. Karma will do all the punishing that is necessary."

ABOUT ELEMENTALS.

"It's a long time ago now that I told you this part would not be explained. But I can tell you some things. This one that you and Olcott used to call * * * can't see you unless I let him. Now I will impress you upon it or him so that like a photograph he will remember so far. But you can't make it obey you until you know how to get the force directed. I'll send him to you and let him make a bell."

[In a few days after this the proposed sign was given at a distance from her, and a little bell was sounded in the air when I was talking with a person not interested in Theosophy, and when I was three miles away from H. P. B. On next seeing her she asked if * * * had been over and sounded the bell, mentioning the exact day and time.]

"This one has no form in particular, but is more like a revolving mass of air. But it is, all the same, quite definite, as you know from what he has done. There are some classes with forms of their own. The general division into fiery, airy, earthy, and watery is pretty correct, but it will not cover all the classes. There is not a single thing going on about us, no matter what, that elementals are not concerned in, because they constitute a necessary part of nature, just as important as the nerve currents in your body. Why in storms you should see them how they move about. Don't you remember what you told me about that lady * * * who saw them change and move about at that opera? It was due to her tendencies and the general idea underlying the opera." [It was the opera of Tristan and Isolde, by Wagner.—J.] "In that case, as Isolde is Irish, the whole idea under it aroused a class of ele-

mentals peculiar to that island and its traditions. That's a queer place, Judge, that Ireland. It is packed full of a singular class of elementals; and, by Jove! I see they even have emigrated in quite large numbers. Sometimes one quite by accident rouses up some ancient system, say from Egypt; that is the explanation of that singular astral noise which you said reminded you of a sistrum being shaken; it was really objective. But, my dear fellow, do you think I will give you a patent elemental extractor?—not yet. Bulwer Lytton wrote very wisely, for him, on this subject."

[Riding over in Central Park, New York.] "It is very interesting here. I see a great number of Indians, and also their elementals, just as real as you seem to be. They do not see us; they are all spooks. But look here, Judge, don't confound the magnetism escaping through your skin with the gentle taps of supposed elementals who want a cigarette."

[In W. 34th street, New York. The first time she spoke to me of elementals particularly, I having asked her about Spiritualism.—J.]

"It is nearly all done by elementals. Now I can make them tap anywhere you like in this room. Select any place you wish." [I pointed to a hard plaster wall-space free from objects.] "Now ask what you like that can be answered by taps."

Q. What is my age? *Taps*: the correct number.

Q. How many in my house? *Taps*: right.

Q. How many months have I been in the city? *Taps*: correct.

Q. What number of minutes past the hour by my watch? *Taps*: right.

Q. How many keys on my ring? *Taps*: correct.

H. P. B. "Oh bosh! Let it stop. You wont get any more, for I have cut it off. Try your best. They have no sense; they got it all out of your own head, even the keys, for you know inside how many keys are on the ring, though you don't remember; but anyhow I could see into your pocket and count the number, and then that tapper would give the right reply. There's something better than all that magic nonsense."

SHE PRECIPITATES IN LONDON.

In 1888 I was in London and wanted a paper, with about four sentences written on it in purple ink, which I had left in America. I came down to her room where B. Keightley was, and, not saying anything, sat down opposite H. P. B. I thought: "If only she would get me back someway a copy of that paper." She smiled at me, rose, went into her room, came out at once, and in a moment handed me a piece of paper, passing it right in front of Keightley. To my amazement it was a duplicate of my paper, a *facsimile*. I then asked her how she got it, and she replied: "I saw it in your head and the rest was easy. You thought it very clearly. You know it can be done; and it was needed." This was all done in about the time it takes to read these descriptive sentences.

William Q. Judge.

WHAT OF PHENOMENA?*

To the Editors of LUCIFER:

"I avail myself of your invitation to correspondents, in order to ask a question.

"How is it that we hear nothing now of the signs and wonders with which Neo-theosophy was ushered in? Is the 'age of miracles' past in the Society?

"Yours respectfully,

"*."

"Occult phenomena," is what our correspondent apparently refers to. They failed to produce the desired effect, but they were, in no sense of the word, "miracles." It was supposed that intelligent people, especially men of science, would, at least, have recognized the existence of a new and deeply interesting field of enquiry and research when they witnessed physical effects produced at will, for which they were not able to account. It was supposed that theologians would have welcomed the proof, of which they stand so sadly in need in these agnostic days, that the soul and the spirit are not mere creations of their fancy, due to ignorance of the physical constitution of man, but entities quite as real as the body, and much more important. These expectations were not realized. The phenomena were misunderstood and misrepresented, both as regards their nature and their purpose.

In the light which experience has now thrown upon the matter the explanation of this unfortunate circumstance is not far to seek. Neither science nor religion acknowledges the existence of the Occult, as the term is understood and employed in theosophy; in the sense, that is to say, of a super-material, but not super-natural, region, governed by law; nor do they recognise the existence of latent powers and possibilities in man. Any interference with the every-day routine of the material world is attributed, by religion, to the arbitrary will of a good or an evil autocrat, inhabiting a supernatural region inaccessible to man, and subject to no law, either in his actions or constitution, and for a knowledge of whose ideas and wishes mortals are entirely dependent upon inspired communications delivered through an accredited messenger. The power of working so-called miracles has always been deemed the proper and sufficient credentials of a messenger from heaven, and the mental habit of regarding any occult power in that light is still so strong that any exercise of that power is supposed to be "miraculous," or to claim to be so. It is needless to say that this way of regarding extraordinary occurrences is in direct opposition to the scientific spirit of the age, nor is it the position practically occupied by the more intelligent portion of mankind at present. When people see wonders, nowadays, the sentiment excited in their minds is no longer veneration and awe, but curiosity.

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It was in the hope of arousing and utilizing this spirit of curiosity that occult phenomena were shown. It was believed that this manipulation of forces of nature which lie below the surface—that surface of things which modern science scratches and pecks at so industriously and so proudly—would have led to enquiry into the nature and the laws of those forces, unknown to science, but perfectly known to occultism. That the phenomena did excite curiosity in the minds of those who witnessed them, is certainly true, but it was, unfortunately, for the most part of an idle kind. The greater number of the witnesses developed an insatiable appetite for phenomena for their own sake, without any thought of studying the philosophy or the science of whose truth and power the phenomena were merely trivial and, so to say, accidental illustrations. In but a few cases the curiosity which was awakened gave birth to the serious desire to study the philosophy and the science themselves and for their own sake.

Experience has taught the leaders of the movement that the vast majority of professing Christians are absolutely precluded by their mental condition and attitude—the result of centuries of superstitious teaching—from calmly examining the phenomena in their aspect of natural occurrences governed by law. The Roman Catholic Church, true to its traditions, excuses itself from the examination of any occult phenomena on the plea that they are necessarily the work of the Devil, whenever they occur outside of its own pale, since it has a lawful monopoly of the legitimate miracle business. The Protestant Church denies the personal intervention of the Evil One on the material plane; but, never having gone into the miracle business itself, it is apparently a little doubtful whether it would know a *bona-fide* miracle if it saw one, but, being just as unable as its elder sister to conceive the extension of the reign of law beyond the limits of matter and force, as known to us in our present state of consciousness, it excuses itself from the study of occult phenomena on the plea that they lie within the province of science rather than of religion.

Now science has its miracles as well as the Church of Rome. But, as it is altogether dependent upon its instrument maker for the production of these miracles, and, as it claims to be in possession of the last known word in regard to the laws of nature, it was hardly to be expected that it would take very kindly to "miracles," in whose production apparatus has no part, and which claim to be instances of the operation of forces and laws of which it has no knowledge. Modern science, moreover, labours under disabilities with respect to the investigation of the Occult quite as embarrassing as those of Religion; for, while Religion cannot grasp the idea of natural law as applied to the supersensuous Universe, Science does not allow the existence of any supersensuous universe at all to which the reign of law could be extended; nor can it conceive the possibility of any other state of consciousness than our present terrestrial

one. It was, therefore, hardly to be expected that science would undertake the task it was called upon to perform with much earnestness and enthusiasm; and, indeed, it seems to have felt that it was not expected to treat the phenomena of occultism less cavalierly than it had treated divine miracles. So it calmly proceeded at once to pooh-pooh the phenomena; and, when obliged to express some kind of opinion, it did not hesitate, without examination, and on hearsay reports, to attribute them to fraudulent contrivances—wires, trap-doors and so forth.

It was bad enough for the leaders of the movement, when they endeavoured to call the attention of the world to the great and unknown field for scientific and religious enquiry which lies on the borderland between matter and spirit, to find themselves set down as agents of his Satanic Majesty, or as superior adepts in the charlatan line; but the unkindest cut of all, perhaps, came from a class of people whose own experiences, rightly understood, ought certainly to have taught them better: the occult phenomena were claimed by the Spiritualists as the work of their dear departed ones, but the leaders in Theosophy were declared to be somewhat less even than mediums in disguise.

Never were the phenomena presented in any other character than that of instances of a power *over perfectly natural though unrecognised forces,* and incidentally over matter, possessed by certain individuals who have attained to a larger and higher knowledge of the Universe than has been reached by scientists and theologians, or can ever be reached by them, by the roads they are now respectively pursuing. Yet this power is latent in all men, and could, in time, be wielded by anyone who would cultivate the knowledge and conform to the conditions necessary for its development. Nevertheless, except in a few isolated and honourable instances, never was it received in any other character than as would-be miracles, or as works of the Devil, or as vulgar tricks, or as amusing gape-seed, or as the performances of those dangerous "spooks" that masquerade in séance rooms, and feed on the vital energies of mediums and sitters. And, from all sides, theosophy and theosophists were attacked with a rancour and bitterness, with an absolute disregard alike of fact and logic, and with malice, hatred and uncharitableness that would be utterly inconceivable, did not religious history teach us what mean and unreasoning animals ignorant men become when their cherished prejudices are touched; and did not the history of scientific research teach us, in its turn, how very like an ignorant man a learned man can behave, when the truth of his theories is called in question.

An occultist can produce phenomena, but he cannot supply the world with brains, nor with the intelligence and good faith necessary to understand and appreciate them. Therefore, it is hardly to be wondered at, that *word* came to abandon phenomena and let the ideas of Theosophy stand on their own intrinsic merits.

WHAT THE MASTERS HAVE SAID *

IN 1888, speaking of Col. Olcott, an article in this magazine quoted from letters from the Adepts sent to Mr. Sinnett at a time some objections were made to the work of the Society on the ground that enough attention was not paid to men of science and to science.[1] Since the year in which those letters were written many persons have joined the Theosophical Society and its sphere of work has greatly extended. And now no less than then, the workers have begun to pay too much attention to the intellectual side of Theosophy and too little to that phase on which the Masters who are behind insist and which is called by H. P. B. in *The Voice of the Silence* the "heart doctrine." Others also have said that they do not want any of the heart doctrine, but wish us to be highly respectable and scientific. Let us consult the Masters, those of us who believe in them.

When the letters to the Simla Lodge were written it was said by objecting Theosophists that it was time now to take a different tack and to work for men of science, and there was a slight suspicion of a repulsion between the Hindus, who are black, and the Europeans, as well as an openly expressed condemnation of the methods of Col. Olcott and H. P. Blavatsky. The reply from the Adepts, made after consultation with others very much higher still, runs in part:

> No messenger of truth, no prophet, has ever achieved during his lifetime a complete triumph—not even Buddha. The Theosophical Society was chosen as the corner-stone, the foundation of the future religion of humanity. To achieve the proposed object a greater, wider, and especially a more benevolent intermingling of the high and the low, of the alpha and omega of society was determined on.

Who determined this? The Adepts and those who are yet still behind them, that is to say, for the Theosophist, the Dhyan Chohans who have control of such matters. Why was it decided? Because the world is sunk in sorrow and in selfishness which keeps the one side of society from helping the other. The letter goes on:

> The white race must be the first to stretch out the hand of fellowship to the dark nations. This prospect may not smile to all alike. He is no Theosophist who objects to the principle. . . . and it is we, the humble disciples of the perfect Lamas, who are expected to allow the Theosophical Society to drop its noblest title, *The Brotherhood of Humanity,* to become a simple school of philosophy. Let us understand each other. He who does not feel competent enough to grasp the noble idea sufficiently to work for it need not undertake a task too heavy for him.

The depth of the sarcasm here cannot be measured, and at the same time it is almost impossible to fully understand the opportunity

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* This article was first printed by Mr. Judge in *The Path* for February, 1893.
[1] *Path,* vol. iii, p. 12.

pointed out in those words and the loss of progress one may suffer by not heeding them. They apply to all, and not merely to the persons they were written to, for the Masters always say what applies universally. The letter continues:

> But there is hardly a Theosophist in the whole Society unable to effectually help it by correcting the erroneous impression of outsiders, if not by actually himself propagating this idea.

Later on, near the time when H. P. B. was in Germany, others came and asked what they might do, how they might work, and what "sphere of influence" they might find. The Master known as K. H. then wrote a letter to one, and at the same time sent copies with fuller notes on the communication to others. A part of that letter has lately been published in the German magazine, the *Sphinx*. In it the Master said among other things:

> Spheres of influence can be found everywhere. The first object of the Theosophical Society is philanthropy. The true Theosophist is a philanthropist, who "Not for himself but for the world he lives." This, and philosophy, the right comprehension of life and its mysteries, will give the "necessary basis" and show the right path to pursue. Yet the best "sphere of influence" for the applicant is now in [his own land].

The reference to *a basis* and *a sphere of influence* is to the idea of those who held that a scientific or at least a very long preparation to get a basis and a sphere for work was needed first. But the answer shows the Adept as not agreeing, and as pointing out the way to work along the line of the heart doctrine. And some of the fuller notes annexed to the copy of this letter sent at the same time to others read:

> My reference to "philanthropy" was meant in its broadest sense, and to draw attention to the absolute need of the "doctrine of the heart" as opposed to that which is merely "of the eye." And before, I have written that our Society is not a mere intellectual school for occultism, and those greater than we have said that he who thinks the task of working for others too hard had better not undertake it. The moral and spiritual sufferings of the world are more important and need help and cure more than science needs aid from us in any field of discovery. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."—K. H.

After seventeen years of work it is now time that the whole Society should pay a little more attention to the words of those Masters of wisdom who have thus indicated the road, and these are the "original lines" traced out and meant to be followed. All those who do not follow them are those who feel dissatisfied with our work, and those who try to go upon these lines are those who feel and know that help is always given to the sincere Theosophist who ever tries not only to understand the philosophy but also to make it forceful for the proving and the exemplifying of the doctrine and object of Universal Brotherhood.

ONE OF THE RECIPIENTS.

Lucifer 211

SIN AGAINST LIFE*

A NEWSPAPER paragraph lately declared that a certain American lady of great wealth, residing in London, had conceived the strange desire to possess a cloak made of the soft warm down on the breasts of birds of Paradise. Five hundred breasts, it was said, were required for this purpose, and two skilful marksmen, the story went on to aver, had been sent to New Guinea to shoot the poor little victims whose wholesale slaughter must be accomplished to gratify this savage whim. We rejoice to observe that the whole statement has been flatly contradicted by the *World*, apparently on the best possible authority; but, however little the lady concerned may deserve the reproach which the authors of the calumny endeavoured to evoke against her, the feeling it may have excited is worth analysis in a world where, if bird of Paradise cloaks are rare, most women who dress luxuriously adorn themselves in one way or another at the expense of the feathered kingdom. The principal involved in a bonnet which is decorated with the plumage of a single bird, slaughtered for its sake, is the same as that which would be more grotesquely manifest in a garment that would require the slaughter of five hundred. Too many rich people in this greedy age forget that the grandest privilege of those who possess the means is that they have the power of alleviating suffering. Too many, again, forget that the sympathies of those who rule the animate world should extend beyond the limits of their own kind; and thus we have the painful spectacle of human "sport" associated in civilised countries still, with pursuits which should no longer afford pleasure to men who have emerged from the primitive life of hunters and fishers. But how is it possible, let us consider, to stoop lowest from the proud estate of humanity in search of ignoble gratification? It is bad to kill any sentient creature for the sake of the savage pleasures of the chase. It is bad, perhaps worse, to cause their destruction for the sake of coldly profiting by their slaughter, and it is bad to squander money in this hard world of want and wide-spread privation on costly personal indulgence. But the acme of all that is reprehensible in these various departments of ill-doing is surely reached when women—who should, by virtue of their sex, be helping to soften the ferocities of life—contrive to collect the cream of evil from each of these varieties, and to sin against a whole catalogue of human duties by cruel acquiescence in an unworthy fashion.

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*This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for November, 1887. Vol. 1

ON THE LOOKOUT

From the loftiest look-out tower available to the writer there is nothing physically visible except war. The Gods of Karma have put their plow point into the ground, and now the past and the future are divided by an awful furrow that marks the end and the beginning of cycles decreed by Nemesis. With the material changes that these things portend we need have no concern. In the great formative planes unseen of men those changes are already accomplished and they are irrevocable. They will materially unfold in their appointed way, and because they are just they will also be ameliorative.

But what will be the changes in human thought? Julian, called the Apostate, saw the Gods of Rome disintegrate before his inner vision as the new cycle summoned forth other and perhaps lesser ideals in obedience to a law that demands the descent into matter as well as the ascent into spirit. That new cycle came with the ruin of empires, the convulsive pangs of old and dying institutions believed by their adherents to be immortal. But Saturn-Kronos brought them to their doom as he brings all things to their doom. Measuring times and seasons he sets their limits, and nothing made by gods or men can survive them. The river of time flows onward from eternity to eternity, and its banks are heaped with the wreckage of civilizations. There is other wreckage buried deep beyond the power of human vision. For such is the law that none can turn aside nor stay.

Who then shall measure the results of this cataclysm upon the minds of men, or foresee the fruits that shall grow from this most fearful harrowing? Once more the gods, dismembered and disintegrated, are fading away into the shades, and the power that was theirs will be theirs no more for ever. And we will let them go without even a requiem. They were gods of greed and ambition. They were gods of false dealing and of guile and of hate. They were gods that separated man from man, and that fed the flames of human pride with the incense of self-love. They were gods that masqueraded in the garments of divinity and that deceived the very elect. Their institutions and their creeds have been weighed in the balances and found wanting, and their kingdom has been taken from them and given to others.

The whirlwind will pass, and the pure air will follow it, and perhaps also the still small voice that we have been too maddened to hear. It is the weight of past and unexpended Karma that has deadened the human soul and kept it from the priceless possessions that belong to it. The world once more at peace may be a world freed from its debt to Nemesis and ready to rise on its dead self to unimagined heights where its purified vision will at last see that the Kingdom of Heaven is veritably upon earth and not elsewhere, and that its gates open only to the touch of human brotherhood.

Some courage is needed at the present time to say a word in defence or in extenuation of war, and we may therefore give some cautious praise to the Rev. Holden E. Sampson of New York who states his opinions at some length in the columns of the New York *World*. War, says Mr. Sampson, "breaks up the static and stagnant condition of a moribund past, to create from the debris new dynamic conditions for the reconstruction and upbuilding of a new age." In this sense war must not be considered as a symptom of decadence or of barbarism. Rather it must be regarded as the birth pangs of a new life, a higher life, as a part of the crisis of world evolution ushering in a better era for posterity. Mr. Sampson then continues:—"The ancient philosopher, (wiser than we are) would say that war is the seed of this reincarnation, sown for a better state of existence in future incarnations. It is because we have lost the genius of the ancient philosophy, in great part, that we have such a panicky, pessimistic perception

of the present war." The writer then goes on to make other references showing that he has at least sipped of the occult philosophy although not quite deeply enough to produce the afflatus of knowledge or even of precise inference. Monarchs and statesmen, he says, must not be blamed since they are but the agents of a "divine and cosmical necessity" and raised up by God as "whips to castigate a nation and to bring righteous judgment for wrong doing." Can we, asks Mr. Sampson, think of the great wars of history, wars that have changed the whole complexion of mankind, as due only to the caprice of individuals, or must we look on those individuals as the agents of a divine purpose, as instruments for the accomplishment of the inevitable?

Mr. Sampson has some reason upon his side, but if he had followed out his theosophical idea more accurately he would have advanced the quite tenable argument that it would be better to cure the causes of war than to lament the results of those causes. Nor would he have absolved from blame the immediate agents of such national Karma who cannot be held to be immune merely because their passions and greeds have been used by the Law of Nemesis. Since Mr. Sampson is a clergyman it may be appropriate to remind him of a scriptural verse which refers quite accurately to this same law of Retribution, or Karma, in the words "Evils must come but woe unto him through whom they come." And there is another passage to the same effect, and also referring to the Law of Karma, which says, "He maketh the wrath of men to serve him". Certainly we cannot shelter ourselves in wrong-doing by the claim that we are the agents of Karma. The burglar and the murderer may be agents of Karma.

But it is only the shortsighted who will be satisfied to place the responsibility for war upon rulers and statesmen. Even the most evil of monarchs would be nearly powerless for harm in a society saturated with the ideals of fraternity. And it may be said conversely that even a divine being would be nearly as impotent for good in a society saturated with materialism and selfishness. To impute blame is always an ungracious task, perhaps even a forbidden one, but it may be said legitimately that nothing but tragedy could come from a materialistic philosophy that taught mutual enmity as the law of life, that prated of the "survival of the fittest" on the assumption that the fittest were necessarily those with the longest teeth and the sharpest claws, and that permeated a whole social system with the conviction that competition and aggressive individualism were necessarily the basis for human society. Any social system prostrating itself before the teachings of Haeckel and Nietzsche must necessarily go down in blood. If "these be thy gods, O Israel" then the finger of an inexorable doom is already far advanced upon the dial.

Mr. H. Addington Bruce writes an article for the *Illustrated Sunday Magazine* on "What I think of Telepathy." Now heaven forbid that there should be any under-estimate of the importance of Mr. H. Addington Bruce who calls himself a psychologist, but the intelligent reader may be pardoned for wondering why anyone should want to know what Mr. H. Addington Bruce thinks of telepathy. So far as we are aware he did not discover telepathy, although he may labor under the impression that he did. The laws of telepathy were well understood many thousands of years ago, and they have been written upon and explained by some of the greatest thinkers that the world has ever known. Paracelsus, among comparatively recent writers, dealt with them elaborately and from a standpoint of knowledge. The old Aryan writings are full of teachings about telepathy. Similar teachings are to be found in the literature of ancient China. The whole world of antiquity is full of them. But about these there is no curiosity at all. Science, having derided for ages this whole department of investigation and persecuted its exponents, has now been compelled at the point of the bayonet to admit its error and to undertake a grudging exploration upon its own

account. And now it stands before the world as a pioneer, eager to tell us what it "thinks" about its new field of research. Now if Mr. H. Addington Bruce had lived forty years ago he would doubtless have been found in the seat of the scornful, and just as eager to deplore a new "superstition" as he now is to sanction and justify it. H. P. Blavatsky, speaking of the invariable habit of the scientist first to deride an unwelcome fact and then to acclaim that same fact as its own discovery, says:—"Harvey stood alone for many years. The advocates for crossing the Atlantic with steamers were in danger of ending their days in a lunatic asylum Mesmer is classed to this day—in the Encyclopaedias—along with Cagliostro and St. Germain, as a charlatan and imposter. And now that Messrs. Charcot and Richet have vindicated Mesmer's claims, and that Mesmerism under its new name of "Hypnotism"—a false nose on a very old face—is accepted by science, it does not strengthen our respect for that majority, when we see the ease and unconcern with which its members treat of "Hypnotism," or of "telepathic impacts," and its other phenomena. They speak of it, in short, as if they had believed therein since the days of Solomon, and had not, only a few years ago, called its votaries lunatics and imposters."

It need hardly be said that Mr. Bruce has nothing to say that can be described as worth saying. The psychic researcher rarely has. But he carries with him a surprising cargo of ghost stories, and these can always be trusted to make so strong an appeal to the popular mind that the paucity of real values passes unnoticed. Thus we find a prodigality of such sentences as this—"About half past three this morning I woke up with a start, and an idea that someone had come into the room." Long ago we used to read these identical stories at Christmas time, but convention demanded that they be properly explained upon the last page. Now the same old yarns are offered to us once more but the conventions have changed. Now they permit and even demand a telepathic explanation, or something erudite but wholly meaningless about "veridical impressions," or "phantasmal energies." Like cocoa they may be said to be grateful and comforting. Like tea they may be said to cheer but not inebriate.

But let us do Mr. Bruce justice. His concluding paragraph goes a long way to make amends for the ghost stories. He says:—"But, the reader may ask, just what is the means by which telepathy works? I confess that I have not the remotest idea." Here at last we find ourselves in full, even enthusiastic, agreement with the learned psychologist. But why did he not say this at the beginning rather than at the end of his article? Now if Mr. Bruce would like to replace his total ignorance by some practical information he can find what he so sorely needs in the authoritative theosophical writings which he can then absorb, digest, and reproduce as his own.

Patience is really the best and most important thing, for it includes many. You cannot have it if you are not calm and ready for the emergency, and as calmness is the one thing necessary for the spirit to be heard, it is evident how important patience is. It also prevents one from precipitating a thing, for by precipitation we may smash a good egg or a good plan, and throw the Karma, for the time, off and prevent certain good effects flowing. So, keep right on and try for patience in all the very smallest things of life every day, and you will find it growing very soon, and with it will come greater strength and influence on and for others, as well as greater and clearer help from the inner side of things.

—*W. Q. J.*